

Sylhet District Records.

No. 1.

TO RICHARD BECHER, ESQ.,
Resident at the Durbar.

Dacca:

9th June 1770.

SIR,

Whether there may be more of art than reality in Mahomed Ally Cawn's John Sumner representation I cannot pretend to say; but I confess it has much the appearance. The Sylhet Province, it is true, yields but a small revenue, and probably can ill-afford any further reductions for charge of collections. The additional annual expense that would be incurred by sending a supervisor, it is to be hoped, will be absolutely compensated for by the advantages that would result to the country and to our Employers; nor in my opinion could these great and laudable ends be attained which are expected from the new system, but by a local residence of some gentlemen.

Confirmably to this opinion and to my intentions of sending an assistant, which I mentioned to you when at the City¹. I had, before the receipt of your last mentioned favour, appointed Mr. Sumner to Sylhet; but, as you seem to be of opinion that Mahomed Ally's representation is not ill-founded, I have countermanded Mr. Sumner's going until I know your pleasure, and, in the meantime, I have thought it not improper to send a person in the capacity of a Vakil to reside there. I hope soon to be favoured with your answer, and am with esteem.

Sir, etc.,

THOS. KELSALL.

No. 2.

TO THOMAS KELSALL, ESQ.,
Supervisor of the Dacca District, etc.

MOHDAPORE:

14th June 1770.

SIR,

By your letter of the 9th of June, I find that, in consequence of an opinion which I had communicated to you, you have countermanded an order you had given Mr. Sumner to proceed to Sylhet. As it never was my wish that this opinion should bias your determination, further than after enquiry it might be consonant with your own, I request you will, on this occasion, pursue the measures which may appear to yourself best calculated to promote the common object of our wishes and the interest of our Employers. I am with much esteem.

RICHARD BECHER,³
Resident.

¹ "The City," i.e., Murshidabad.

² Probably Madapur, about three miles to the east of Cossimbazar, vide P. C. Majumdar, *The Musnud of Murshidabad*, page 234.

³ For Becher's career in Bengal, see Hunter *Thackerays in India*, pages 100-106, 166 and Buxted. *Echoes from old Calcutta*, page 49. T. Kelsall was one of the Madras Civil Servants set up by Lord Clive in 1765 to supersede the Bengal Servants.

RETRO

No. 3.

TO THOMAS KELSALL, Esq.,
Supervisor of Dacca.

MOORSHIDABAD :
3rd January 1771.

SIR,
Charges
catching
phants.
for
ele-

As the Company have thought proper to forbid all further charge on their account for catching elephants, we cannot authorise their being put to any expense on this head at Sylhet, and we have not omitted to send orders to the Supervisor of Tippera¹. But as it appears, the revenue may be affected by entirely discontinuing to catch those animals, and also that they multiplying may overrun and lay waste the province of Sylhet, we desire you will permit us with an account of the expense incurred upon the term of catching them until their delivery, and we shall endeavour to settle it to be defrayed by the *Nizamut*. With respect to those which have of late years infested the *parganah* of Bawall, we can only for the same reasons acquiesce in your authorizing the zemindars to destroy them at their own charge.

We are, etc.,

JAMES LAWRENCE,
JOHN GRAHAM.²

No. 4.

TO THOMAS KELSALL, Esq.,
Chief and Supervisor of Dacca.

SYLHET :
22nd January 1771.

SIR,

In consequence of your orders received at Dacca the 21st December 1770, I hastened hither without delay, and, arriving the 11th instant, I caused, on the 13th, the paper mentioned in your paragraph to be publicly read in open outcherry, taking care that the purport of it should be explained to all degrees of people : To which end I likewise recommended to the Dewan to render it generally known throughout the country, as you had ordered him in a letter I found some months ago. The advertisement therefore is copying out to be transmitted to each district within the Chukla of Sylhet.

Revenues
of
Sylhet.

When I can obtain a clear idea of the Collections at this place—I shall proceed as expeditiously as I can to render the information you require of a general state of the province. The Bundibust and Sebundee account³ for the Sylhet, year 1179 or Bengal year 1175-76 I have required from the Dewan, and have received some particulars of them : but I find it necessary to refer to five different cutcheries for the Bundibust of some purgunna, as there is so many cutcheries established here for the collections of this small province.

I have presented your letter mentioned in your 6th paragraph to the Naib Phousdar : he referring it to the Dewan, who has the charge of the collections in the Phousdar's absence. He tells me that there is a balance

¹ Walter Wilkins was appointed Supervisor of Tipperah in 1769.

² Sobandee (Sibandhi). Irregular troops, or charges in the revenue accounts for the maintenance of such troops.

³ John Graham, see *Bengal Part Present*, Vol. IV. p. 489.

necessarily arising at the end of every year, which he has always yearly explained to the Nabob, and he assures me that a part arises from an exaggerated statement made by a former Phousdar to the Nabob with a view to emulate arrival in his Master's favor, that however the amount never was collected in one year, but that credit has always been given in part to the Province on these representations; that he had as usual this year made the same plea, and hoped now to obtain the same deduction.

He gives in an account of 65,929 cowns of cowries which is the amount of deductions annually demanded these seven years: and offers a "Muchulca" ¹ binding him to refund any part of this that had been collected at the close of the year. I have not thought of taking his Muchulca. He acquaints me however that seven or eight thousand cowns of cowries have been since collected on that account, and he expects no more.

I shall lose no time in examining minutely into this deficiency, as you enjoin; and expect soon to complete the account of the whole Bundibust of last year.

The Pooniah ² was held here in October last; that is the ceremony of it was carried through: but the Dewan's sickness had not enabled him to settle the rents throughout the Chuckla. He is busy in completing the Bundibust, and I have recommended to him points of general encouragement to all ranks of people engaged either in the rents or collections, to stimulate the Zemindar in his cultivation with assurances he shall reap his lawful advantage, to clear in its source any obstructed channel of the revenue, and to instigate every Collector to be mindful of his duty both to Government and to the landholders. In short to use all caution against any future pretence to unlawful exaction, and every check to embezzlements of the established revenue. What remains to be done, I shall attend to the fair settlement of, and in it shall hope to fulfil the salutary purpose of your instructions to me.

The management of the rice crop is ever the first object of every one who has an interest in a province: for on it depends primarily a great moiety of every country's revenue and secondarily of every rupee the Zemindar gives. It is that by which most of the rayats pay their rent; and on it the entire food of every native more immediately depends than in any country in the world. The head of a country is obliged to watch over this, then, as his single hope, in policy as well as in humanity: and as the head of this country the Dewan and Naib Phousdar presented their apprehensions to you, Sir, they acquaint me. The August crop they represent was suddenly overwhelmed by an extraordinary rise of waters last season, in which part of the December crop was lost. The effect of this failure appears by rice being four times as dear as it was two years ago—and this at the first of the season. Rice crop.

This effect of facts undoubted appears at present to me to be but too natural a one. The Dewan, moreover, apprehended some such public order for purchases as was found necessary last year, when this country abounded in rice, while the other lands in Bengal unhappily failed. ³ He remonstrated even in an abundant season against exportation, and he says you listened to his complaint in part. There always subsists indeed one palpable objection

¹ Muchulca, or Muchalka. A written penalty bond.

² Pooniah (Punya). Annual meeting of direct payers of land revenue to settle the amount of the assessment.

³ A casual allusion to the terrible famine of 1769-70.

to investments of this necessary of life being made here for exportation : and it has often weighed with Government to send their Perwannahs in support of the Phousdars here against exporters. The reason is this the country is almost half surrounded by billy¹ countries inhabited by a hostile people ; and there is only one river communicates with the rest of Bengal—which is at Aomiry Gunge², so that imports of rice are not to be hoped for in this distant and separated corner of the kingdom ; in consequence the raiyats would desert their habitation on an appearance of scarcity. Most of these arguments the Dewan presses in an urgent manner. I shall, in compliance with your orders, observe caution in putting any fetters on the trade of this country—unless it be evidently necessary to prevent a greater evil.

Hall Rajas.

It may be proper to inform you that the Rajahs who possess the hills bordering this province are at present in hostility with each other. Within a very short distance from the town of Pondawa³, where the trade of our merchants and theirs is carried on, there have been two battles between two contending Rajahs, and within a day's journey of Sylhet, almost between it and Pondawa, another Rajah has lately commenced hostilities against the Rajah of the country about Pondawa.

Courts
Justice

I am endeavouring to complete your design relative to the cutcheries of justice ; and the establishment of them on such a footing as you recommend, I shall make the most serious object of my attention, and will lay a plan before you, when I am fully acquainted with the purposes of there being so many to execute justice here. A list of seven is delivered in to me. I am enforcing your plan as well as it can be adopted to such a variety of Courts, and shall be very happy to carry on the true spirit of it in an uninterrupted course of justice.

I am, etc.,

JOHN SUMNER.

No. 5.

To THOMAS KELSALL, Esq.,

Chief and Supervisor of Dacca and Sylhet.

SYLHET :

18th February 1771.

SIR,

John Sumner,
Collector of
Sylhet.

I was pursuing the plan of your instructions received the 22nd December last, and about to give you the information relative to the state of this Chukla, that I acquainted, you on the 22nd January, I was seeking from the papers of the Sylhet cutcherries—when on the 7th instant I was honoured with your further directions, dated the 2nd February, to take upon me the whole charge of the revenues as Collector under you, Sir !

¹ Billy, from Bengali *Bhil* (Anglo-Indian Bheel). The haors, which from June to September form wide lakes, are a distinctive feature in Sylhet scenery. For a list of the haors or marshes, see B. C. Allen, *Sylhet* (Assam District Gazetteers), Appendix A to Chapter I.

² Ajmiriganj on the Surma.

³ Pandush.

SYLHET DISTRICT RECORDS.

Conformable to these orders, on the 10th instant, I came into the Kellah, ^{The Sylhet Treasury.} and delivered to the Naib Phousdar the Naib Dewan's Purwannah of recall. It was read before the Congoo¹ and other officers, as well as those on the part of the King as those employed in the revenue. Your authority was immediately acknowledged by those and all others present, and without hesitation they submitted to the full controlling powers invested in you. The Treasury and stores the arms and ammunition were accordingly delivered over to me in your name, Sir. The Treasury being chiefly in cowries is kept in several parts of the Town, there being but one brick building, which is insufficient to hold it in the Kellah, the bulk is so immense, and it may be so soon destroyed by fire that wherever a brick house is to be hired they secure it, but a great deal is now in straw houses and subject to injury.

Relative to the orders you honored me with about the elephants I find myself at a loss in what manner to act since I received your's. The Dewan had orders and had transmitted them to the Zemindars who catch these animals to desist. Intelligence too is arrived that the people are returned from the hills where they are caught. Only twenty that had been entrapped in the Department of Bamassil, &c., Pargunnahs are this year secured to the Government, nor is it possible without a very great additional expense, and the hazard at last of their being too late to succeed, that the Zemindars can go out again on the pursuit. As there are twenty caught, and, as this is near half the number annually brought in, I hope I may be justified with you, Sir, in not ordering out the Zemindars again until I can receive your further directions, as success is very precarious so late in the season, as the people would not be ready, and the price of them would turn out greater than usual. The expense incurred at the beginning of the season may, by their having desisted so early, be possibly made up in the same labour being applied to cultivation that was to be used in hunting elephants: nor will there be any hindrance to their going out a future year, if the Board of Revenue should approve of their being caught by the Zemindars of this country who, most of them, go so far as Tippera for these animals. For they most abound in the hilly countries to the south-eastward of Sylhet, and all the Zemindars but those of Boondassil² go as far as the Tippera country in the pursuit.

Elephant
Catching.

The Zemindars of two or three Pargunnahs join in sending seven or eight hundred men to the hilly and woody countries, and they travel five or six and sometimes twelve days before they meet with their haunts; then, surrounding them they, by keeping the animals in perpetual apprehensions for some days together by noises and fires, are enabled to dig ditches and throw up the earth around to confine them, and by means of tame elephants they are afterwards secured and brought in.

This practice is pursued by the Zemindars, I say, who have for these fifty years paid them as Royal Revenue, but they have often complained of its taking their Raiyats from cultivation, and made it an excuse for their other revenue falling short, though, on the other hand, they now begin to murmur on my demanding from them a Bundabust for money to the full amount they are annually credited account elephants, and, if they do not catch them, the money is seldom collected which is generally a considerable loss to Govern-

¹ Congoo-Canungo [Kanun-go].

² Boondassil. Boondarsye on the Cachar frontier.

ment, and last year appears to be cows of cowries 24594, 12, 2, 1, though again there is a small branch of revenue from Selammies¹ of the stated allowances to the Zemindars and Daroghas of the *Kaidah Mohl*², as the business of elephant catching is called. Another method used is to entrap them singly, and this is done by means of three tame elephants with keepers attending in two departments only. (The Sircar Alle & Dowlat Modar catcherry.) This mode is practised, and it was originally established by Aliverde Cawn to supply the Nabob himself, as the largest or finest beasts only range singly, and it appears the most eligible one to be kept up; because whenever the Province is molested with these animals it is not in numbers. The tame elephants are placed at five different stations on the Eastern border from Taruff³, to Bungah⁴ and they are carried out whenever a wild one approaches. It is indeed reckoned the most dangerous, but then it is the only mode that seems of use to the country; for the catching of elephants the other way, as they go to a distance for them, seems only to have been with a view to the advantage derived from those animals as beasts of burden and of magnificence in war: As most of the Sylhet Zemindars go as far as the Tippera districts for them, and it should seem, I humbly presume, that the Government could be more chiefly supplied from thence immediately. As too, by all the sorts of information I can gain, it appears that the country may be kept free of those animals by the prohibition remaining on the *Kaidah Mohl*, while the Sikary, or pursuit of single elephants, is practised, at the different stations on the borders, and by the numbers kept here which is now five and twenty tame elephants, they can at any time resume the practice of catching numbers at a time, since almost the whole art lays in the management of the tame elephants; and were there none caught, it seems not to be apprehended by any people concerned either in the permanency of the revenue, or security of the country. That the inhabitants could be long molested since they can always frighten them away by the very simple methods everywhere known, of making noises or lighting fires which every Raiyat is acquainted with, as the animals are certainly terrified to an astonishing degree at any such alarms and as they seldom leave their woods in numbers, or if they do it is conceived a drove is more easily frightened away than one or two, the latter generally being the largest. The prohibition appeared to me to be of so little apprehension to the country that I thought you would choose to know all the facts I could obtain of this business upon the fullest enquiry.

I am preparing the account you require in your letter of the 2nd instant of every expense attending the catching of elephants, and shall do myself the pleasure soon to forward to you from the Catcherry books a full statement of this branch of revenue.

I am, etc.,

JOHN SUMNER.

¹ Selammies. Salam-peace or safety. A salutation on meeting or parting, hence Selammi a present to a superior on introduction, and so a gratuity given on settling for revenue, or an annual fine levied on holders of rent-free tenures as quit rent.

² Kaidah, Kheda, the inclosure in which elephants are caught. Mohl = Mahal or estate subject to revenue.

³ Taruff. A pargana in the Habiganj subdivision noted for its molasses.

⁴ Bungah. Bhanga.

No. 6.

TO THOMAS KELSALL, Esq.,
Chief and Supervisor of Dacca.

SYLHET :
25th February 1771.

SIR,

Conformable to these orders of the 1st instant, I came into the *Kellah*¹ and delivered to the *Naib Phowzdar*, the *Naibs Dewan's perwannah* of recall. It was laid before the *Congo*² and other officers as well as those on the part of the King³ as those employed in the revenue. Your authority was immediately acknowledged by those and all others present, and without hesitation they submitted to the full controlling powers invested in you. The treasury and stores, the arms and ammunitions were accordingly delivered over to me in your name, Sir. The Treasury being chiefly in cowries is kept in several parts of the town, there being but a brick building which is insufficient.

I am, etc.,
JOHN SUMNER.

No. 6-A⁴.

TO JOHN SUMNER,
Acting Supervisor of Sylhet.

The Hon'ble President and Council having vested the different Supervisors with full controlling powers over their respective districts, the continuance of the *aumals* on the part of Government becomes unnecessary and they have been recalled accordingly.

The same change is to take place in your department and you will receive herewith the Naib Dewan's *perwannah* of recall to the Phowzdar, which you will deliver and order him to return to the city after having obtained such.

No. 7.

TO THOMAS KELSALL, Esq.,
Chief and Supervisor of Dacca and Sylhet.

SYLHET :
25th February 1771.

SIR,

I had the honour to address you the 22nd January and 18th February. In the former letter I acquainted you that the balance of 65,929 cowns of cowries was likely to remain a dead balance ; I had then only carried my researches towards the particular heads, which was said to have been deficient, and most of them are such as must necessarily fall short, seeing the Bundabust was made from the private papers of a former Phowzdar, and as I mentioned the whole Bundabust was drawn out with a view only to

¹ Kila, i.e., Fort.
² Canungo.
³ The King, i.e., The Moghul Emperor.
⁴ Copy not dated or signed.

get the post by showing an increase of revenue to Government. The whole Bundabust is almost ready, but I have been the longer in preparing it from finding the Cutcherry papers differ from their first accounts. The deductions required by Mohomed Ali, I say, appeared at first reasonable, but on a closer inspection, I find, though this sum of 65,929 cowns has chiefly failed, there are two branches of Collections made in the province, unknown at Muxadabad¹, which more than make up the sums that fall short.

When the Bundabust was increased 10 years ago, an additional sum of 1,77,645, 6, 19, 3 was leived on the Zemindars, under the Head of Kifait² Phouzdary, or perquisite of the Phouzdarship, of which 26,258, 5 2 Cowns is brought to account. The rest 43,391, 1, 7 Cowns cannot be collected. The remaining 47,983, 12, 1, is charged for the Poonia and other necessary charges of the Phouzdar—but of this sum so large a perquisite arises that from it, and what I am going to mention, the Phouzdar Dewan has agreed to make up the whole balance due for last year.

The next advance of the Phouzdar's is nominally 60,000 Cowns levied on his private account from the Zemindars, I find that this falls somewhat short in collection, but from both a scheme suggests to me which I offer upon the strictest enquiry into the state of the Pergunnahs. It is also totally consistent with the plan of collection adopted by the Board. It is known that a Zemindar will rather consent to pay such sums as these on a private account than have them brought on the Mustahood or Rent-Roll of his country. Now I presume you would wish to abolish all such collection and give him even no pretence to exactions from his Raiyats on this account, at any time now the former sum falling short near as much as the whole of the latter, perhaps fall as much as is collected. I beg leave to propose that the sum levied on private account may be wholly abolished and the 1,17,645, 6, 19, 3 insisted on in full, which I understand the Zemindar will cheerfully consent to: and it will have the effect to annihilate the very name, and in time, I hope, the idea of private collections on the poor Raiyats perhaps without any loss to Government, but certainly with but a trifling one, and only such as will show the inhabitants, that you are in earnest in the public advertisement real to them³ nor can I recommend a more eligible or cheaper purchase of their good-will, or a plan more necessary to the good of this country after the closest scrutiny I can make into the present and former state of it, which convinces me that both sums cannot be now collected,—and it is not in my power to bring them both even into the Bundabust, without totally dispiriting the Raiyats and Zemindars, who never paid more, I observe, than private and public demands have of late obliged them. Of this 1,17,645, 6,

¹ Muxadabad, i.e., Murshidabad.

² Kifayat-i-Fawjdari. "Increased assessment on the frontier lands held by military governors, levied by them at first for their own benefit, but brought to the audit of the Government by Ka-sim Ali Khan." H. H. Wilson, *Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms*. See J. Grant's *Analysis of the Finances of Bengal*. (Madras Reprint of the Fifth Report—Volume I, page 301.)

³ Vide Long, *Selections from Unpublished Records of Government*, page 511 in 1767. The native revenue collectors are charged by the Collector of Calcutta to report possible improvements in Revenue "without laying the ryots under any hardship it being the Company's intention that he should enjoy ease and comfort." The Supervisors in 1769 were expressly enjoined to assure the cultivator "in the most forcible or convincing manner," "that our object is not increase of rents, or the accumulation of demands, but solely, by fixing such as are legal, explaining and abolishing such as are fraudulent and unauthorized, not only to redress the present grievances, but to secure him from all further invasions of his property."

19, 3 only 26,288, 5, 2 comes now into the Bundabust and none of the 60,000, which aggregated will make this year Bundabust 89,000 Cowns more than last, excepting the Poonca¹ charges, etc., which I believe can be reduced to 12,000 Cowns or 15,000 and excepting what of the 65,929 shall appear to be an irrecoverable branch of revenue, as they have for many years stated that sum to be ; but I have already been able to make a settlement of a small part of that sum.

I cannot presume to abolish even so arbitrary a demand as the 60,000 Cowns demanded from the Raiyats on a private account ; but sensible, that more cannot be collected as public revenue, I humbly propose this plan to collect so much as 43,394, 1, 9 in lieu thereof, to answer many good purposes of bringing credit to your collection and to the new mode of collection with such address as many appear advantageous to the Zemindar, as cases the Raiyats of a real heavy load, abolishes injurious collection and gives an effectual check to lawless control in the *Annalls* and *Zemindars* without abridging much that particular source of revenue which is turned from a private to a public channel.

I am, etc.,

JOHN SUMNER.

No. S.

TO WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, ESQ.

DACCA :

29th November 1773.

DEAR SIR.

I am favoured by your letter of the 20th and preceding it, by another letter, ^{Tulram and Mussood Bux.} the date of which has passed my memory : the subject the same. You must be sensible my inclination leads me in all points to consider your wishes as far as may be consistent with the indispensable duties of my public office ; those I must perform and allow a superior claim to my consideration. A reference in all my complaints is my intention, and my intention remains the same ; but when it is represented that an obvious interest thwarts or obstructs a repeated application for justice in a cause of *menm* and *teum*, you are sensible I cannot deny my interposition or refuse to hear it before me. This is the necessity under which I issued the summons on Tulram and Mussood Bux and it is the only necessity under which I shall ever interfere ; and could I preclude all applications, that bring it upon me, it would give me a double pleasure, first by avoiding the trouble occasioned to myself : secondly by answering in the fullest manner your desire that the whole concern, whether public or private, relating to the Province of Sylhet, or individuals who reside there, submitted to you.

Circumstanced as I am, it is at present only in my power to protract the time of Tulram's and Mussood Bux's summons, which I do by a perwar-nah intimating the cause and directing their attendance within two months from the 1st of Poes. In this period I flatter myself you will be able to adjust your transactions with Tulram and Mussood Bux, as they must at that

¹ vide note 2 on page 8.

time absolutely attend me, unless the former settles with his creditors, and the latter can compromise with the party who pretends to have been injured by him. The Luskarrahs¹ guilty of the attempt of exacting money shall be punished: the usual allowance is to be made to them by the Assamees,² and the hirkarrahs, as officers of the cutchery, must remain upon them until the officers at Dacca, at the withdrawing the order and people who proceeded with it, would show in the light of the orders from the cutcherry being trifling and reversible, whereas nothing ought to be more fixed and determinate to confirm the natives in opinion of steady and uniform administrations.

Cutcheries.

You may be perfectly easy with respect to any change further than the abolition of all charges. If the cutcheries are necessary, the farmers must petition for them, and they will be supported at their sole charge.

I am, Sir, etc.,

R. B.

P.S.—I have written repeatedly for the Bengal accounts, and without effect, which forces me to note it in my public letters. Be so kind as to acquiesce in that particular, and furnish me with the Bengal papers.—R. B.

P.S.—The complaint against Mussood Bux being for talooks, and as his rights may well be pleaded by Vakil, I have altered his perwanah, and directed that he should send a Vakil immediately with all his papers, and your examination of the matter mentioned in your letter.—R. B.

No. 9.

TO WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, ESQ.

DACCA :

8th February 1774.

DEAR SIR,

I have received from the bearer 321 *gurries* instead of 322. other man declare: he has not received from your *sircar* more than 321. I thank you for the supply of this article, and shall be further obliged by your increasing the quantity a little.

Yours,

R. B.

No. 11.

TO MR. WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY,

SYLHET.

DACCA :

8th February 1774.

SIR,

Incursion of At your repeated and particular instance for an officer to lead the detach-
the Khasis. ment of troops stationed at Sylhet and oppose the incursion of Cossahs,³ I

¹ Lashkar (luskur, lascar) a sailor, but applied to tent-pitchers, artillerymen, etc.

² Asami (literally names), a non-proprietary cultivator.

³ Khasis.

have requested Ensign Leake (who opportunely was on a visit to Dacca) to place himself at their head, the charge being readily accepted by that gentleman, I have in consequence put him under your orders, and he is to follow such instructions from you as you shall think it necessary to issue to him. A further re-inforcement of 50 men of the Dacca Militia will be conducted by him to your assistance.

I am, Sir, etc.,
R. B.

No. 12,

TO ENSIGN LEAKE.

DACCA :

8th February 1774.

SIR,

The occasion which endued me to apply to you to take the command of the troops in Sylhet calling for your immediate presence in that district, you will be pleased to repair thither with all expedition, and upon your arrival you will follow such instructions and orders as may from time to time be given you by Mr. Thackeray. I have in consequence of letters received from Mr. Thackeray directed a re-inforcement of 50 men with their proper officers to be drafted from 5 independent companys of Militia of Dacca to march directly for Sylhet, this detachment you will be pleased to take charge of, and conduct with all expedition possible. You are to observe, as a positive rule, to report regularly to me the state of the forces at Sylhet, to make returns of all the troops in the District to Mr. Thackeray, and to transmit monthly to Lieutenant Russel Arden a return of the Militia, which compose a portion of the force under your command.

I am, etc.,
RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 13.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.

DACCA :

10th February 1774.

DEAR SIR,

You will perceive by the public letters, dispatched hence to-night, that I have been led into an irregularity from the emergency of the occasion that call'd for an Officer to lead the force now in Sylhet for the defence of the Province; and as it will be necessary either to appoint an Officer to relieve Mr. Leake immediately, and perform the occasional service on which he is sent, or to appoint that Gentleman under my orders, if you choose he should execute that duty, I request the favour of you to issue the necessary directions. The conduct of the Jaintia¹ Rajah I make no doubt you will think merits chatisement, but, as the entire reduction of his country may prove a task more

¹ Jaintia. For an early reference to the Rajah of Jaintia, in a letter of H. Verolst, 29th May, 1763, See Long Selections No. 661.

Taintia Campaign.

difficult, more expensive, and more uncertain than Mr. Rennell's¹ representation gives reason to apprehend, you will possibly judge it to be more for the public interest that he should experience its resentment, and give satisfaction for the depredations he has committed by reimbursing the expense of the troops and paying an equivalent for the damage that he has done. The force already in Sylhet is, I imagine, able to repel any he may possibly oppose to it in the flat country, and capable of subjugating the district he holds between the foot of the Hills and the Rivers; and, as it is the most valuable part of his dominions, your taking possession of it, which may be easily effected, will necessarily induce him to come to the terms, I have mentioned in order to re-obtain it.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 14.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.

Dacca: .

22nd February 1771.

DEAR SIR,

Ditto.

I am obliged by your letters of the 19th whether the intelligence is true or false, I am equally indebted to you for your kind congratulations.²

You may depend upon my keeping to the line you prescribe for any operations against the Gentia Raja. He has really, I believe, been the aggressor, and invited by some of the Sylhet people. I acquit Thackeray of any intention to inflame, as it is his particular interest to be on good terms with the Rajah; and he has, and may, suffer still more from the incursions of the hill people, and can have no prospect of advantage in continuing the quarrel. I hope the troops will not have a month's work to bring the Raja to reason. The navigation of the Soomah as it was through all the Sylhet Province, is certainly an object, and if it can, without much trouble be rendered free should be negotiated.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 15.

TO WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, Esq.

Dacca:

27th February 1774.

DEAR SIR,

Ditto.

I have received your letter of the 28th, and am glad to find from the contents there appears a disposition in the Rajah of Gentia to make due concession for the injury and insult he has committed against the Government. But before I open myself on this subject, it is absolutely necessary to enjoin you

¹ Major James Rennell, the famous Surveyor of Bengal. He married Oct. 15th, 1772, Miss Jane Thackeray, eldest of W. M. Thackeray, the Collector of Sylhet.

² R. Barwell was appointed Senior member of the Supreme Council by the Regulating Act of 1773, when made Hastings Governor-General. Hence the congratulations.

³ The letter bears this date in the MS., but I think this must be a clerical error, and the date this letter must be April 27th.

to [yielding ?] with respect to the views of the Government, for unless these ^{Jaintia Campaign.} are pursued with caution, it is possible they may be disappointed, and as such disappointment may probably be imputed to your management, it behoves you to be particularly careful in transacting what it is expected the Raja will submit to—to satisfy the Company. The President and Council have given me full power to retaliate the injury committed by the Gentia Raja, but at the same time intimate that it is not their object to attempt an entire conquest. Their end is to make him sensible of his error, to oblige him to reimburse the public in expense, that is incurred by the march of the troops, to obtain from him a compensation for any loss of Revenue occasioned by his depredations, and, lastly, to render free the navigation of the River Soonah.¹ In order to effect this, a reinforcement of troops are in order, to meet and join the troops in Sylhet. They are to enter the dominions of the Gentia Raja, and subdue all the flat country lying between the Hills and the River Soonah; and, in effecting this purpose there is but one consideration which you must allow to influence you to stop the progress of the troops—which is the Raja's implicit compliance with the demands of our Government, *viz.* :

The payment of Rs. 25,000 for the expense incurred by the expedition. A sum equivalent to any loss the public revenue is likely to sustain from the Raja's late invasion of the Company's territory; and the free navigation of the River Soonah.

If these points are obtained, and the Rajah makes due submission for his conduct, you are to leave him the full and peaceable possession of his country, and to order back the troops as soon as possible, as the insult afforded by the Raja is of that public nature as to require the most public reparation, you will direct him to send vakils to make his submission to the Governor in Calcutta, and to me as Chief of Dacca entrusted with the care of the Company's interests in Sylhet. And in accepting any terms from the Raja or in giving him any assurances on behalf of the public, you will invariably insert this clause "provided the Hon'ble the President and Council approve, otherwise this is not to be in force."

I am, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 16.

TO CAPTAIN E. ELLIKER.²

DACCA:

Feb. 1774.

SIR,

I enclose you the Board's sentiments as to the conduct you are to pursue, should the Tannadar be able to keep possession of the country you have subdued without any assistance from the English forces, the district is to be immediately placed in his hands, but if his power is not equal to its defence,

Ditto.

¹ The Surma.

² Edward Ellerker. In many books the name is wrongly given Hanniker.

Jointia Cam- you are, in such case, to evacuate the Gentiah dominions, and remove as
paiga. many of the inhabitants into the District of Sylhet as may be, publishing in
your retreat that the insults offered to it shall not go unpunished; that should
any of neighbouring Hill Rajas, or the Gentiah Raja enter the Company's
districts in a hostile manner, the insults will be avenged by a similar invasion
of their country and by the destruction of all their towns.

I am, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

P.S.—As soon as possible you will return with your detachment to
Chittagong, leaving a company of your men stationed at Sylhet for the defence
of the Province. You will likewise direct Mr. Leake to march the Militia
Sepoys to Dacca, excepting one half company, which is to remain with the
company of the Chittagong sepoy's under the orders of Mr. Thackeray at
Sylhet.—B. B.

Abstract of the Council of Revenue, Fort William.

The Board are of opinion that, although the treacherous conduct of the Gentiah Raja merits an additional punishment, still the prosecution of hostilities against him for the conquest of his country is not an object worth our consideration, especially as it would contradict the declared purpose for which we are engaged in the undertaking, and of which we have advised the Hon'ble Company,—that, if therefore, the Pundua Zemindar cannot retain nor engage to retain the possession, which we may grant him of the country, without the continued aid of our forces, the expedient recommended by Mr. Barwell cannot be admitted, as it will have an increase of expense, and a prolongation of the expedition and a division of our force. But if the Tannadar¹ will be satisfied with our putting him in possession, and will not require our sepoy's to protect him in it, that Mr. Barwell be authorized to settle it with him on such terms as he can; otherwise to order Captain Elikor to lay waste the country and do the Raja all the mischief in his power, and to return, declaring that the same retaliation shall be made for the first instance which he shall repeat of encroachment on our Government.

Agreed the President be requested to give orders to this effect to Mr. Barwell.

A true abstract,

(Signed) S. DROZ,

Secy.

No. 17.

TO CAPTAIN E. ELIKOR.

Dacca:

17th March 1774.

SIR,

Ditto.

I have received your letter with a return of your Detachment, and am this instant favor'd with another of the 12th, desiring a supply of 50 Barrels of Ball Cartridge. I do not believe there is in store above 2,000 Ball Cartridges

¹Tannadar, Thanadar, the Commander of a military outpost or thana.

Whatever there is, shall be immediately despatched, and a further quantity, as Jointia Cam- soon as prepared, shall be forwarded to you, but as that further supply must paiga. be made up with country powder in the Garrison, you will possibly be able to supply yourself full as well at Sylhet. However, lest you might not, the supply shall be sent to you.

I have mentioned to Mr. Thackeray, the Collector of Sylhet, the objects the public have in view by the expedition against the Gentiah Raja, and to that gentleman I must refer you for such instructions as are necessary to regulate your conduct upon entering the Gentiah Province. Upon your arrival at Sylhet, you will take upon you the command of the forces in that Province and to your judgment and discretion is entirely left the mode of conducting the war in the manner you shall determine as most expeditious and decisive.

I am, Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 18.

TO CAPTAIN E. ELLIKER.

Dacca,

DEAR SIR,

[Not dated.]

Enclosed is a copy of my letter to Mr. Thackeray. I hope the footing on which you will act under that gentleman is such as may be agreeable to you; and, considering your acquaintance with Mr. Thackeray, and your own disposition, I flatter myself nothing will arise in the course of the service which may prove disgusting to either, as a cordiality between men, who should have the same object in view, is so necessary to insure success to every public measure that I am pleased at the prospect, which the intimacy that subsists between you and Mr. Thackeray gives me of a mutual consideration swaying each, and obviating the possibility of a misunderstanding.

Ditto.

I shall be obliged to you for your private sentiments on any points you touch upon in your public addresses.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 18A.

TO MR. WILLIAM MAKEPACH THACKERAY.

Dacca :

17th March 1774.

SIR,

The Hon'ble the President and Council having been pleased to appoint Captain E. Elliker, of the 7 Battalion of sepoy, to the command of the expedition against the Gentiah Raja, he is now on his march to Sylhet with a detachment of his Battalion consisting of 3 companys. Upon his arrival in Sylhet, you are to place under his command all the forces with you in the

Ditto.

Jointia Cam- Province, and Mr. Leake, who commands them, is in future to act under the orders of Captain Elliker. By the extract of my letter to Captain Elliker, you will perceive that the operations in the field are wholly submitted to his judgment and discretion and that he is merely to receive from you information of the service to be performed: but in the manner of the service he is to be the sole and only judge. Your advice may be given to him on any points you think essential, but to his brain I leave to judge and determine on the means proper to execute the service he is sent upon.

I am, Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 19.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.

DACCA:

9th April 1774.

DEAR SIR,

Ditto.

I enclose you news which arrived from Sylhet late last night. As the Pundua Tannadar, who is tributary to the Company, is the only power capable of opposing the incursions of the Gentiah, should he attempt to return to his country, you will probably be of opinion, as the Districts are contiguous, that the new acquisition had better be delivered over to the Pundua Tannadar. I imagine that it will prove the most short and expeditions made of setting the country, of withdrawing your office's and obtaining a re-imbursement of the charges already incurred.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

P.S.—I request the favour of your permission to repair to Calcutta as soon as my business will permit.

No. 20.

TO CAPT. E. ELLIKER AT GENTIAH.

DACCA:

14th April 1774.

SIR,

Ditto.

Your letter of the 31st from the Gentiah Raja's capital, communicating intelligence of the entire reduction of the flat country and the flight of the Raja beyond the Hills, I received the other day. The alacrity with which the forces have been conducted, and the facility of the conquest of an extensive and wild country are facts so fully approving the abilities by which they have been brought about that any other approbation proves superfluous. I must thank you, Sir, however, in the name of the Hon'ble Company for the important services you have rendered to the public in the speedy and effectual performance of your commission, with a body of troops so unequal to the numbers opposed to you, and through every obstruction to be surmounted in marching troops through a country unexplored, and at a season of the year that must have greatly retarded your operations.

Jaintia Can-
paign.

The little room you give me to expect from the Gentiah Raja any compensation for the expense incurred by the Company, and the averse disposition he has shown even to the last extremity (his exclusion from his dominions) has determined me if possible to secure the peace of the country without deviating from the end the public have in view. A military fixed establishment for the protection of Sylhet beyond that formerly allowed is to be avoided, and if the Raja continues disinclined to our Government, and obstinately refuses the clemency offered to him on the most just conditions, in order to baffle his views and to answer the purposes of the Government, such parts of his dominions as we are possessed of must be added to the Zemindary contiguous to it, and as that belongs to Achmet Riza, the Tannadar of Pundua, I have written to him on the subject, and directed him to send a Vakil to Dacca to settle the terms on which he is inclined to hold the country and protect it. This measure is taken, however, with this reserve, that I deem it only necessary in case the Gentiah Raja continues hostile, for I would much rather be acquiesce to the propositions offered, as he may undoubtedly prove himself a natural and strong barrier to the incursions of his Hill neighbours. I therefore wish you may be able to induce him to come in to you, and inspire him with a confidence of the equitable intentions of the public, that the Company never had any views on his country that they expected from him only what his interest and good policy should have dictated to him, that is to engage to oppose the incursions of the Corsyals, not encroach on the Company's lands, let river Somali be the boundary, within 5 coss of the banks of which he shall not have a Tannah or Bustee, and lastly to pay the sum of money demanded on account of the charges of the expedition.

I am, Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 21.

TO WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, ESQ.

DACCA

2nd May 1774.

DEAR SIR,

I enclose to you to forward to Capt. Elliker my letter to him of this date. If the Gentiah Raja will come into any terms, I would recommend you to restore him to his country instead of giving possession of it to Amut Riza, the Pundua Tannadar. He must have the ratification of any terms you make with him from me and the Governor, and will, in consequence, send his Vakils to Dacca and Calcutta.

Ditto.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 22.

TO WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, Esq.

DACCA :

12th May 1774.

DEAR SIR,

Jaintia Cam-
paign.

I am favoured with your letter of the 1st of May. You will find both by public and private advices from the Board and myself, that it is not our intention to impose Amut Riza upon you against your inclination. The only consideration that first influenced the attention he received has proceeded from my knowledge of his being the only person who could possibly maintain the conquest of the Gentiah country without rendering a constant aid from our troops necessary to support him in it. Yet, I have been all along of opinion that the restoration of the country to the expelled Raja would be most eligible, if he received it under a just impression of the lenity of our Government, and the fear of offending it on any future occasion. As you seem to think he is fully sensible of his error, and that there is no danger of his acting again in such manner as to incur the resentment of the Government, you will make the best terms you can with him and take from him what you can get towards reimbursing the charges that have been incurred.

The losses which the farmers have suffered from the disturbances occasioned by the incursions of the Gentiah Raja, properly represented by them and authenticated by you, will doubtless be considered by the public in as favourable light as circumstances require. The public engagements certainly imply the former is to be protected from invasion, and consequently that he is entitled to a remission in proportion to the detriment he may have suffered from the calamities of war.

I read your letter to the Board, and it was judged better not to record it, as everything was left to you to settle with in the manner most advantageous to the Company and most agreeable to yourself. The proposition for depriving of Amut Riza of his jagghire, we likewise [thought] might be deferred until you could personally explain the grounds on which such a resumption was to take place, for as every jaggiridar holds by military tenure, and none in the Provinces maintain troops agreeably to their Jagghires, Amut Riza appears in no respect more reprehensible on that account than others in the same situation.

I shall be glad to see you as soon as it suits your convenience to come down, but until you can make some compromise with the Gentiah, I think your leaving the public interests at this critical period, may be attended with consequences that may reflect on your attention; and, as I was sensible it would not be agreeable to depute a member of the Council to adjust matters with the Gentiah Raja in your absence, you will judge for yourself on the propriety of leaving Sylhet before you settle with the Raja.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 23.

TO CAPTAIN E. ELLERKER.

DACCA :

26th May 1774.

DEAR SIR,

I write you publicly in answer to your public address of the 11th, to which I have only to subjoin my wish for a speedy adjustment with the Reza and the return of your detachment. The economy of the times render the administration impatient and uneasy under every extra expense, and as a delay in withdrawing the troops from Genthiah may be attended by strictures from below I should be sorry to incur, I beg you will evacuate the country as soon as possible. The same system of parsimony I apprehend will render the request I make, at your instance, for *butta* to the troops ineffectual; the obvious remark of establishing a precedent to be pleaded in all future occasions will, I no doubt, be started in opposition to it.

Jaintia Campaign.

The cause you assign for the Raja's diffidence is so just a one that it entirely acquits him, in my opinion, of the least degree of insincerity.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 24.

TO WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, ESQ.

DACCA :

26th May 1774.

DEAR SIR,

I enclose you my letter to Captain Ellerker on the subject of the public interests, which I recommend to you to settle to the best manner possible. Mr. Leake (if it is absolutely necessary) you may continue at Sylhet, but there must be no necessary expense on account of that gentleman incurred. As I shall set out for Calcutta in twelve days, and not return before August or September, for the purpose probably of delivering over the charge of the chiefship to a successor, I could rather wish to meet you there than to have you at Dacca, when I am debarred that pleasure! besides, no sooner do you take your seat at our Board, but your separate charge in Sylhet ceases. The vote of the Hon'ble the President and Council of Fort William debarring me from my seat at the Calcutta Board expressly says that no person holding a District appointment can be admitted occasionally to a seat in Council. The reasons, as assigned by the Governor, you will see on perusing the copy of his minute enclosed.

Ditto.

Should you determine on resigning your station, I shall be much obliged by your giving me timely information. In the meantime, I have thought it eligible to appoint Mr. Daniel Barwell your assistant, and to proceed to Sylhet as soon as he receives an invitation from you. Another reason for my desiring to know your intentions in this particular is the necessity there will be to establish the authority of the Dewan of this Province, who, from my consideration to you, holds but a nominal office as Rogoo Mullick Circal officiates.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 25.

TO CAPTAIN ELLIKER,

Comm'dg. at Gentiah.

DACCA :

26th May 1774.

SIR,

Free naviga-
tion of the
Surma.

I have received your letter of the 20th enclosing a return of the troops under your command, and likewise your letter of the 11th intimating the terms to which the Gentiah Raja appears ready to acquiesce. As all the natives of Bengal are on the same footing with English merchants by the late regulations of the Government, the subjects of the State, whether English or native, must be admitted to the same privileges in all points of commerce. The navigation of the river Surma must, if possible, be rendered free, and an exclusive privilege to the Company to the stone for making chunam, that is to be procured in the Gentiah country. Though it is recommended to obtain a free navigation of the river Surma, you are not to infer from this that a restriction is proposed of the Raja's rights in the point of levying duties on any articles of merchandize to be bought or sold at the ganjes or markets which are under his Government. The rates or duties, however, on all merchandise bought and sold in the Gentiahs's country should, if practicable, be fixed in a just and equitable degree. These interests will claim the attention of Mr. Thackeray, and the preliminaries of peace being settled with due regard to these, you are immediately to withdraw the forces in Gentiah, leaving at Sylhet the number of troops appointed for the defence of the Province, and return with the remainder to Chittagong. There appearing to be no further service for the detachment you command at Gentiah, by the instructions I have received, I am under the necessity of repeating my injunction to you to repair as soon as possible with the detachment to Chittagong ; and the request for *batta* to the sepoys while on service shall be duly intimated to the President and Council, and their order communicated to you.

I am, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

No. 26.

TO WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, ESQ.

CALCUTTA

8th May 1775.

DEAR SIR,

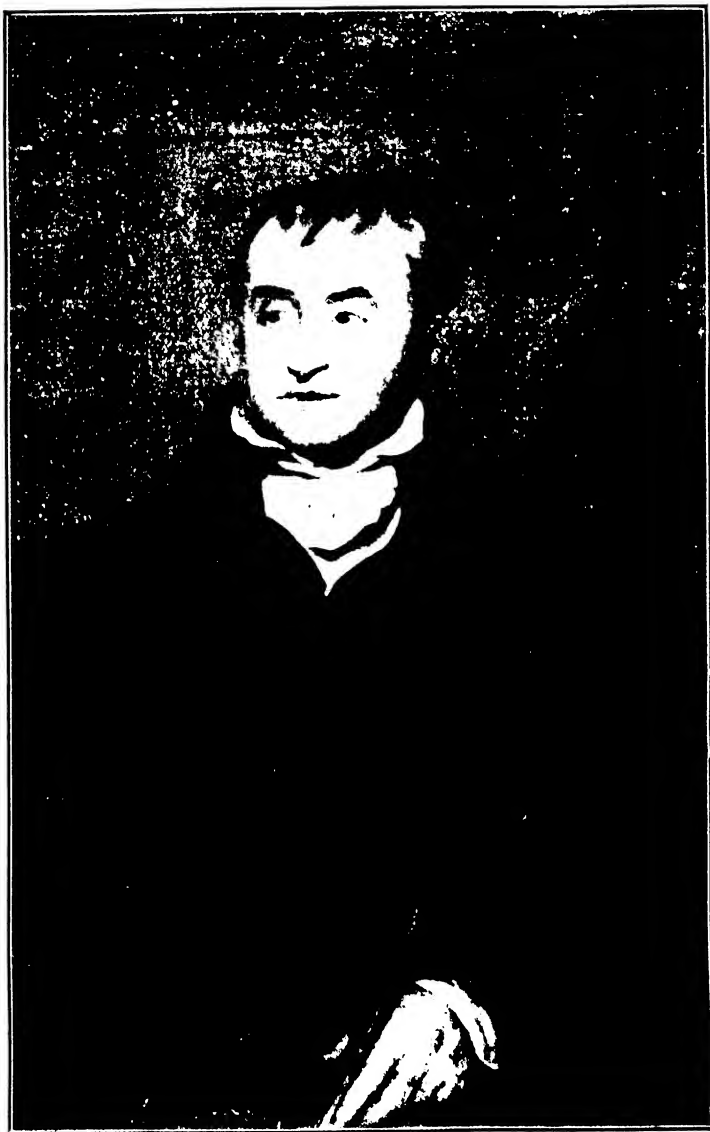
Thackeray ex-
pected
Calcutta.

As you were some time ago expected in Calcutta, in consequence of the leave of absence from Dacca you applied for through Mr. Barwell, he concluded you would bring his accounts with you, in order that it might be settled. But, as it seems likely that you have for the present laid aside the thoughts of paying a visit to Calcutta, I am desired by Mr. Barwell to beg the favour of you to furnish him with your account, as he is anxious to have all his concerns settled and brought into as narrow a compass as fast as possible.

I am, dear Sir, etc.,

J. C[ATOR.]¹

¹ J. Cator was a Company's covenanted servant, but he seems also to have been Barwell's Private Secretary and Agent.



W. M. THACKERAY
(Grand-Father of the Novelist), Resident at Sylhet.
(By kind permission of Messrs. Smith Elder & Co.)

No. 27.

TO CHAS. WILLIAM BOUGHTON ROUS, Esq.,
Chief of Dacca.

DACCA:

17th August 1777.

SIR,

Upon my arrival at Dacca, in the month of April 1775,¹ I represented to you the difficulty I found in procuring a house, there being none of the Company's then vacant nor even of private property to be rented.

Lindsay's
house at
Dacca.

On this account, you granted me a waste spot of ground bordering upon the river which I have been at very considerable expense in levelling, likewise in repairing and rendering habitable an old bungalow situated on the spot, and in building brick offices for the security of the public papers, which I was then entrusted with. I hope, therefore, you will take the above into consideration, and grant me a pottah for the ground.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 28.

TO CHAS. WILLIAM BOUGHTON ROUS, Esq.,
Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET:

14th October 1777.

GENTLEMAN,

Mr. Richardson arrived here some days ago and presented me with authority from Mr. Thackeray to dispose of the house² in which I now reside, either at public sale, or in any other manner which may appear to him most conclusive to the interest of his constituent.

Thackeray's
house at
Sylhet.

The ground upon which the house stands immediately belongs to the Company, and, as I understand that a considerable sum of money has been charged to their account in constructing of it, I informed Mr. Richardson, that, unless I am favoured with the sanction of your Board, I shall protest against the sale.

I now request your orders upon the subject; at the same time I take the liberty of informing you that it is the only habitable spot in the town of Sylhet for a European, especially for a person in the office I now have the honour to hold. Any other which I might fix upon for my own residence would be rendered disagreeable from the lowness of the soil, and the distance it must unavoidably be from the public offices would submit me to great inconvenience.

I have, etc.;

R. LINDSAY.

¹ This corrects a statement in Lindsay's Autobiography (*Lives of the Lindsays*, Vol. III, p. 159), which would lead the reader to suppose that Lindsay arrived at Dacca "in the autumn" of 1776.

² 'Sir William Hunter says that when he visited Sylhet he was 'shewn Thackeray's house.' The house has made way for the present residence of the Deputy Commissioner. Lindsay purchased the house. See letter of 6th November 1778.

No. 29.

To CHARLES WILLIAM BOUGHTON ROUS, Esq.,
Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

10th November 1777.

GENTLEMAN,

Misleading
calculation
of value of
cowries.

By the accounts of the month of Bawdon 1186,¹ you will perceive a balance in the treasury here of Rs. 18,153, the former sum at the rate of 4 cawns, 4 puns per R., ought to produce cawns 72,612-11. This apparent deficiency of the cowries is accounted for by the Revenues, having ever since the year 1185, been summed up upon the credit side of the Monthly Treasury Accounts at the imaginary valuation of 4 cawns per R., and remitted at the rate of 4 cawns, 4 pun. That of the rupees is, therefore, merely nominal, and the cowries the actual balance. I now have the honour to transmit you the accounts of this province for the month of Assin, 1187, in which I have carried the balance forward and brought the Revenues to account only in cowries, to prevent the like confusion in future, which I hope will meet your approbation. I will, in a few days, have the pleasure to transmit you the account settlement of this province for the Sylhet year 1187. The Bengal holy days interfering, and the Zemindars not coming from the moffussil to renew their engagements, has been the cause of my not sending it you sooner.

I have, etc.,

B. LINDSAY.

No. 30.

To JOHN HOGARTH, Esq.,
Acting Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

24th November 1777.

GENTLEMAN,

Settlement for
1187,
S.Y.

Enclosed I have the pleasure to transmit you a Kistbundee and Account Settlement of this province for the Sylhet year 1187, in which I have agreeable to my instructions adhered as nearly as possible to that of last year affected by Mr. Holland. Some deductions I have made, in the pergunnahs, I have increased in the sums.

In one instance, I beg leave to submit to your consideration of a small remission would not be advisable, as it would in a great measure tend to secure the tranquillity of this province. Under the head of Segah² and Moujrai lands there is a revenue of 3,400 cawns of cowries annually demanded from the Hill Rajahs for a small tract of country they hold at the bottom of the Ponduah mountains, an entire jung'e, and of little or no value. This, as well as all the other Segah lands, formerly paid no revenue, but contributed a certain proportion of artificers and bergondassies,³ as public service required their

¹ i.e., the Sylhet year 1186 = A.D. 1776-1777.

² Segah seems to be a special Sylhet term = rent free lands on grounds of public service.

³ Bergondassies = Borkandaz, lit. "lightning darter," hence an armed unmounted employe of a civil department.

attendance. The establishment, being found unnecessary, was abolished in the year 1185,¹ and the lands brought to the account of the Company. This revenue of 3,400 cawns can never be recovered from the Hill Rajahs without a force of 15 or 20 sepoys being annually sent to Ponduah to enforce payment, and this measure may be productive of the bad effect of putting an entire stop to that amicable communication now subsisting between our merchants and the Hill pykars who bring down their goods to that market in exchange for copper. Last year by getting in possession of one of these petty Rajahs to procure his release they paid the Revenue. In the year 1185 a party of 20 sepoys was sent to Ponduah to recover this trifling sum, and the merchants residing there, to prevent themselves being plundered by the inhabitants of the hills for what they considered an insult offered to them, became security and paid the money. This year, unless I am favoured with your orders to the contrary, I shall be under the necessity of making use of the same measures to enforce payment of this trifling sum.

Segah and
Morgrai
Lands.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 31.

TO JOHN HOGARTH, Esq.,
Acting Chief of Dacca.

SYLHET :
The 18th December 1777.

SIR,

The Zemindars of the Orungpore pergunnah under Sylhet, having represented to me that they have been severely maltreated by the Zemindar of Aurungpore pergunnah² in the Dacca district, they have requested me to trouble you with this in hopes of receiving redress.

Complaints
from Orung-
pore.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 32.

TO JOHN HOGARTH, Esq.,
Acting Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :
21st December 1777.

GENILEMAN,

I have the pleasure to transmit you the accounts of this Province for the month of Kartick and Augun 1187, as likewise the bills of exchange drawn by Mr. Raitt³ on Mr. Matthew Day. I also enclose you the original and translation of a petition I have received from the Zemindars of the Khedah Mahals who pay a considerable proportion of the revenues of this Province. They have been exceedingly importunate on this subject, nor could I persuade

Complaints of
Zemindars
of the Khed-
dah Mahals.

¹ In the manuscript 1180, but see letter of 14th July 1779. No. 90, page 68.

² Arangpur in the Balaganj Thana about 9 miles south-west of Sylhet.

³ In the Sylhet cemetery there are monuments to—

(1) William Robert Raitt, died 3rd July 1801, aged 61 years.

(2) Henry Thomas Raitt, died 23rd July 1819, aged 64 years.

A Thomas Raitt was Alderman of the Mayor's Court at Calcutta in 1755, and was one of the Commissioners appointed in 1757 to value the houses destroyed in the seige. Vide Hill, *List of Europeans in Bengal*, 1756, p. 76.

them to go into the hills upon the same terms they have done for some years past, till they received my promise of representing their case to your Board. As it is pretty clearly stated in their petition, though perhaps a little exaggerated, I take the liberty of submitting the same to your consideration, and beg leave to remark that the Zemindars are at a considerable expense in making khedahs, and but a small part of their lands [are] cultivated. Should it therefore happen that they are unsuccessful in catching elephants, it will be difficult to realise the revenue when demanded of them at the expiration of the year.

If you was to favour me with an order for the Nababs' Agent to allow them a small increase in the price of the elephants, he will even then have them upon very moderate terms: at the same time, the Zemindars will be able to fulfil their engagements more easily than at present.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

Petition of the Zemindars of the Pergunnahs Chaubgant, Dewroul, Pertubgur, Zuffergur Douddee, Cocssearcool, Egarsuttee, Sunglah, Cunnyhutti and Burron.

In the time of the Kings your petitioners depended upon the khedahs for their mauzugary. If, after deducting the price of the elephants, there remained any balance due from them, your petitioners gave a mochulca to make many khedahs, and to pay the balance in revenues the year following.

Since the time of the Gentlemen,¹ if there happens to be any balance due from the petitioners, after deducting the price allowed them for their elephants, the mutsuddies take it from them in ready money.

The whole ryotts of your petitioners' pergunnahs are obliged to go into the hills to prepare the khedahs, and not a man left to cultivate the land.

Should it be the will of God for your petitioners to catch no elephants, exclusive of the money they have advanced to make khedahs, they are obliged to take full amount of the revenue from their ryotts. By this means your petitioners are ruined. The zemindars of Jointah² and Cutchar³ make khedahs and sell their elephants to merchants at the following rates: for the Kallans and Mianahs 1,200 cawns and 600 for the Khords.

Your petitioners, therefore, pray that the khedahs may either be abolished or that they may be allowed an increase in the price of the elephants.

No. 33.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.,
Governor-General.

SYLHET:

28th December 1777.

HON'BLE SIR,

Warren
Hastings
patronage.

Although I have not the honor of being personally acquainted with you, yet the letters of recommendation I delivered to you upon my first arrival in the country from my friends, General Carnac, Mr. Sullivan and Commodore James together with my not having troubled with any applications since I

¹ i.e., of the Company's Administration.

² Jointia.

³ Cachar.

have been in Bengal, emboldens me now to intrude upon your time.' I need not inform you that the Dacca Council, at the expiration of the Sylhet year 1186, deputed me to this place, not only to collect the balances of that year but to renew the obligation for the ensuing, both which I performed in a satisfactory manner, and received the approbation of the Dacca Board, and I hope I shall not be less successful in collecting the revenues of this than last year, and flatter myself from the knowledge I possess of the country languages and the business of the collections; there are few more qualified for the station I have the honour to hold. I now take the liberty of requesting your countenance and support, as long as you may deem me deserving of it, and beg leave to subscribe myself.

Sir, etc.,
B. LINDSAY.

No. 34.

TO JOHN HOGARTH, ESQ.,
Acting Chief of Dacca.

SYLHET

The 17th January 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

I take the liberty of informing you that the officers of the Phogedary Adawlat of Dacca have sent ten harrarrahs and a sepoy into the Cossimnagury pergunnah under this Province upon a complaint of a ryot against one of the chowdries. On this account several of the Zemindars have run away which prevented me from collecting the kists of Augun and Poos. I hope, therefore, it may appear expedient for you to order the harrarrahs to be recalled, and the officers of the Phogedary Adawlat of Sylhet to take cognizance of the complaint.

Runaway
Zemindars.

I have, etc.,
B. LINDSAY.

No. 35.

[Received the 5th February.]

TO MR. LINDSAY at Sylhet.

DACCA :

January 17th 1778.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 21st ultimo, with the several enclosures with regard to the petition of the zemindars of the khedah mahals. We cannot at this time think of allowing any addition of price for the elephants, and the zemindars must adhere to the terms of the last Settlement.

Reduction of
price of ele-
phants dis-
allowed.

We are, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEAR.
M. DAY.

* Lindsay in his Autobiography says:—"I resided for nearly two years in Sir John Clavering's society, and therefore marked as a party man, and passed over in the general promotion." He attributes his appointment to Dacca to Boughton Rous who belonged to the Francis party. This letter in which a Collector writes to the Governor-General—"I have not the honour of being personally acquainted with you" is doubly remarkable, as coming from one who had been associated with the Governor-General's opponents. *Lives of the Lindsays*, Vol. III, p. 159

No. 36.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

26th February 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

Chittagong
Battalion.

Accompanying I have the pleasure to transmit you the Treasury Accounts of this province, for the month of Mang 1187, as likewise Lieutenant Bentley's receipts for the pay of the detachment of the Chittagong Battalion stationed here for the month of January and February.

Agreeable to your orders of the 2nd December, I have advanced Sheik Gholam Hossein, elephant's darogha on the part of the Nabab, such sums as he has applied for : his receipt amounting to A. Rs. 6,350, I take the liberty of enclosing you.

I have, etc.,

B. LINDSAY.

No. 37.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

14th March 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

Currenseery
Zemindary.

Mahamed Ally, Zemindar of Currenseery, a small pergunnah under this Province, of 200 cawns annual jumma, dying last year, left behind him a mother, a widow, daughter and brother, by whom the succession to the zemindary is now contested. The widow of the deceased, to establish her claim, produces a will executed by the chowdry a few days before his death, constituting her sole heiress and executrix to the estate. The mother of Mahomed Abed does not dispute the title she has to the effects and movables of the deceased, but objects to the right the chowdry had to bequeath his zemindary, which he did not purchase but reversed to him from his ancestors. It is a point which I would not take upon myself to determine, but consulted the Canungoes on the subject. Their sheraamah, or report respecting the established customs of the country, in consequence of the questions I proposed to them, I take the liberty of enclosing, by which it appears that, in cases of the like nature, the zemindary, when their heirs male [die], is never inherited by the female branch, who by counter marrying with the zemindars or chowdries of the neighbouring pergunnahs, and carrying along with them their share of the lands, would entail a great confusion upon the country. Both parties await your determination on the subject which I beg to be favoured with, and have the honor to subscribe myself.

Gentleman, your, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 38.

[Received the 10th April.]

TO MR. ROBERT LINDSAY.

DACCA :

26th March 1778.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 14th instant. As we understand the ^{Currenseery} cause therein referred to has been decided in the Dewany Adaulut at Sylhet, ^{Zemindary.} it can be reversed only by an appeal regularly made. We, therefore, request that you direct the parties to attend before our Board.

We are, Sir, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WILLIAM HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

No. 39.

[Received the 21st July.]

TO MR. LINDSAY.

DACCA :

The 20th April 1778.

SIR,

We now enclose you a petition from Doolut Das, an inhabitant of Sylhet, which includes various complaints against Monickchand. We request you will grant a particular and full investigation of these complaints, forming regular proceedings on them which you will be pleased to transmit to us when completed. Doolut Das.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WILLIAM HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

HY. LONGE.

The Petition of Doolut Das, inhabitant of Sylhet.

The purgunnds Azzaurah Suttie, Doavdee, Zuffergurrah, Orungaband, Badhusur, Panjikund, Agnaram, etc., talooks I purchased, according to Cawallahs and Choudhrie Sunnuds, under the seal of Hakeems, and which are now in my possession. However, the Dewan Maunickchand, collecting with the Zemindars, would not give me possession. I also purchased the talooks of

Mhalkhadah in pergunnah Purtanb Gira, the Sunnad Choudrai of which are in the name of my son Sahabbiam and under the seal of the Hakeems and in my possession. Radahram Gomasta, by colluding with the said Dewan, has obtained the possession of the whole of the talooks, and withholds the payments of considerable sums that is due to me. The said Dewan also disposed me of Haut Barra Parah and Nowazesh Gunge that were under my zamindary, and gave them in farm to another. The same part of the zemindary of pergunnah Hoosearkul, etc., was allotted for the wages of the Sairahdars and written according to the Sunnud of the Hakeem in the name of my son Huckoomat Ram; the tunkaw of which, the said Dewan made hazaarft, and collects revenue, so the Sairahdars used to revenue on account of the Tumkaw 2 cawn 4 pun for every rupee; that now the above Dewan demands the double. Kirparan, the Goinastah of the said Dewan, has forcibly taken possession of a haut in pergunna Shaibauk, Manikpore, Arzarah Suttie, and the land of Chuidood, which were included in the purchase of my zemindary. The wages of the Mukundlesker Pinzaubee, which was annexed to my serrah is also made hazaarft; now the said Dewan takes them for Pinjaube and for the time that they served he gave them no wages. By a Sunnud of the Hakim's which is in my name, also a purwannah which I have under the seal of the Company, I was allowed to collect on every boat that brought goods for sale or carried away any, one pun of cowries on account of Taukoor Sevoy. The said Dewan, by the collusion of the Zemindars, will not permit me to collect it. My nephew, Tillook Chand, was appointed from the Presence to the khidmut Mushroofie of the King's Revenues, and has got a Dewanee Sunnud for it in his possession; the said Dewan abolished the above Sheristah, also made Bazaarft the allowance that was allowed on account of the Sheristah from Pergunnah Pangekaund. Sahabram and Jaigovind got a Hukoomnamah, and were appointed from the Presence to the Tavildar or to the Musprufie Sherryut Punnah Business. Mr. William Holland signed their petition, and ordered the Dewan to put them in possession on their business, according to the Hukoomnamah. However, he, through enmity, did not do it. We were formerly appointed to the business of the Salt Mhals, according to the Dewanee Sunnud in my name. Mr. Harris,¹ upon receiving a note from Mr. Cartier, made an enquiry, and gave me a Sunnud, which Sunnud is in my possession. The farmers dispossessed me and sell their own salt, also prevent my people selling salt in 51 shops, which are my Chundunah Jammah. I was also appointed to the paun mhal, according to a sunnud from the Presence in my name. The said Dewan has appointed another farmer to it, and dispossessed me. On account of these oppressions, I am unable to remain in my native country, and am, therefore, a complainant at the Presence. I beg you will write to Mr. Lindsay to make an enquiry into every circumstance and to give me possession.

A true copy,

WM. HUNTER,

Secretary.

A True Translate.

(Signed) T. P. BROUGHTON,

Assistant Persian Translator.

¹James Harris, Chief of Dacca, married Miss Henrietta Thackoray, whose sister Jane married Major Jas. Rennell, the great Geographer. These ladies were sisters of Wm. M. Thackoray, the Novelist's grandfather, and Resident at Sylhet.

No. 40.¹

[Received the 15th May.]

TO ROBERT LINDSAY.

Dacca :

The 23rd April 1778.

SIR,

The Nawab having thought proper to appoint a new Darogha² at Sylhet, Darogha. I now furnish him with this introduction to you. I don't find that he possesses any directions for taking up money on account of the elephant charges. You will, therefore not make any payments to him, without previous advice from hence.

I am your most obedient Servant,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

His name is Meer Aoor Ally.

No. 41.

To the Hon'ble ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM :

The 15th May 1778.

SIR,

On the 5th August 1776 and the 6th May 1777, orders were issued to all the Provincial Councils and Collectors to send their monthly Treasury Accounts and estimates of their probable resources and disbursements for one month in advance, agreeably to particular forms transmitted them, to the Governor General in Council. No separate copy of these Circular Orders was forwarded to you, because it was supposed that the balance in your hands would be included in the Dacca Treasury Account, but, as that does not appear to be the case, I now enclose copies of the Circular Orders, which you will henceforward be pleased to attend to, commencing with 1st April 1778. Treasury Accounts.

I am, etc.,

J. P. AURIOL,

Secretary.

Copy of a Letter to the Provincial Council of Revenue, dated the 5th August 1776.

The Hon'ble the Court of Directors having been pleased to direct that monthly statement of the balance in your Treasury shall be regularly sent to the Presidency, we transmit you a copy of their orders : in consequence whereof we have thought it necessary to adopt a new form for the accounts required of you in future, which we enclose for your guidance ; and, as many of the Revenue Councils have been remiss in complying with our former orders for monthly estimates of resources and disbursements, we peremptorily require you to draw out the accounts henceforward in the manner prescribed in the present form, and to despatch them punctually to us by the 2nd day of each month closed to the end of the preceding month. We have directed the Secretary to lay before us on the 15th of every

¹ Holograph letter. 1 ² See letter No. 183.

Treasury Accounts. month such account as he may then have received in consequence of these Orders, and we shall not fail to take proper notice of any that may be deficient.

J. P. AUBRIOL,
Secy.

Extract of a General Letter from the Court of Directors, dated the 15th December 1775.

Paragraph 31.—In order, therefore, to obtain from time to time a more perfect cash account, we direct that our subordinate Revenue Councils transmit cash accounts every month, dated the same day of the month, and that they specify the date and amount of their last remittance to the Khalsah, that you may be certainly informed whether such remittance be received at the Presidency or not. You are then to state the balance of the Khalsah Treasury for the same day as the accounts of the subordinate treasuries are made up to, and to transmit such accounts properly adjusted to us, by every ship, for our information.

A true extract,
J. P. AUBRIOL,
Secy.

[Received the 24th May, answered
the 1st June].

Running Treasury Account of Division.

	Rs.	BY FORT WILLIAM PRESIDENCY.	Rs.
To Balance of our account to the end of last month	1,00,000	Remitted under the following dates, for 1st August or 1st September, inclusive, viz., 12th August.	
To Revenues collected from 1st August to the 1st September, inclusive.	20,000	One despatch of treasury and by bills as per challan of this date Sicca ...	10,000
		20th September—one ditto as per ditto ...	20,000
		Advanced to the factories.	
		Account the investment.	
		As to the troops.	
		BY CHANGES.	
		Disbursed on that account.	
		Balance of cash in our hands this day.	
		Gold Mohurs O. Rs.	
		Siccas	"
		"	"
		Arcots	"
		"	"
		Mohur Sicca Rupces.	
		Sicca Rupces.	

Sicca Rupces.

A true copy,
J. P. AUBRIOL,
Secy.

[Received the 24th May, answered
1st June.]

Copy of Circular letter, dated the 8th May 1777.

In order to enable us to provide for the occasional emergencies of the service by an early knowledge of the expected Revenues of your division, we desire that you will add to the monthly amount of actual receipts and disbursements, which are now transmitted to us, an estimate in the following form, *vis.*—

Balance in hand as above.
Probable receipts of next month.
Probable assets of June.
Deduct for disbursements of ditto.
Remains expected balance.

A true copy,
J. P. AUBIOL,
Secy.

No. 42.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,
Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET,

The 5th of June 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

Accompanying I have the pleasure transmit you the accounts of this province for the month of Bysack with two bills of exchange, account the revenues of the present year, *viz.* :—

	Rs.	s.	p.
1. Drawn by Mr. H. Raitt on Mr. Matthew Day for .	2,000	0	0
Goat Poorah.			0
1. Ditto upon Gholam Nubby of Dacca	3,980	8	0

G. P. Rs. 5,980 8 0

The roof of an old brick building, made use of as the treasury, having fallen in, I have ordered it to be repaired, and the cowries to be deposited in a ghola. An estimate of the charges repairing the same, amounting to 250 A. Rs., I take the liberty of enclosing, and hope you will give me permission to insert it in my next month's accounts.

The annual allowance for building and repairing the Cutcherry and other straw offices is already expending, they having been twice burnt down in the course of the dry season.

I am, etc.,
B. LINDSAY.

No. 43.

Dacca,
The 30th June 1778.

To Mr. LINDSAY.

SIR,

Petition of
Hadgy Fazel
Ally. We herewith send you a petition against one Hadgy Fazel Ally delivered to us by one Budleram. We request that you will examine in to the complaints of the petitioner, and render him redress, if they are founded in truth.

We are,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servants,

J. SHAKESPEARE.

WM. HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

HY. LODGE.

I went to Cachar in order to purchase elephants, etc. With a great deal of trouble and difficulty and at a great expense of cowries, I bought five elephants. Hadgy Fazel Ally then came, with a great body of people, and forcibly attacked my house, took from me the five elephants and all my ready money and goods, and, having kept me in confinement seventh months, reduced me to the point of death. I am, therefore, hopeful that an order to Mr. Lindsay may be granted me that he, summoning the said Hadgy Fazel Ally into his presence, may restore me my right. Besides to you, Gentleman, to whom can I apply for redress against violence?

A true copy,

C. BURBOWES.

Secy.

No. 44.

Dacca,

[Received the 17th July.]

The 3rd July 1778.

To Mr. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

SIR,

We have received your letters of the 24th and 25th June with the several accounts enclosed.

Accounts.

We have written to the Presidency in respect to the letter you have received from the Secretary to the Public Department. You will, therefore, discontinue sending any accounts in consequence of that requisition until you hear further from us.¹ However, we desire at the foot of each monthly Treasury Account you will annex an account of the probable receipts and disbursements for the ensuing months.

¹ As a matter of fact, Lindsay had sent his accounts to the Presidency on the very day the letter arrived.

We further desire that from the commencement of the new year, you accounts may be entirely drawn in cowries, as the placing a nominal value upon them in rupees occasions confusion in our accounts.

We are, Sir, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WM. HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

HY. LODGE.

No. 45.

Dacca,

The 13th July 1778.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY at Sylhet.

SIR,

As war has been declared between Great Britain and France, it is War with necessary that every subject of France who may be found within your limit France. should be made prisoner. For your guidance I enclose your copy of the Hon'ble Governor General in Council's order upon the subject, to which your rule carefully attend. From such persons as may be found at Sylhet in the character of gentlemen, and on whose word you are of opinion reliance may be had, you will accept their parole, and release them, but any stragglers must be sent down prisoners. The parole should be taken in writing and express that they will immediately to proceed to Dacca and surrender themselves to me.

I am, Sir, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

No. 46.

TO MR. JOHN SHAKESPEAR,
Chief, and Council at Dacca.

FORT WILLIAM,

The 9th July 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

In consequence of a declaration of war which was made by the Court of War with Great Britain against France on the 18th March last, and by the France France. against England on the 30th of the same month, we do hereby recommend you to send a military force to the French factory to demand of the Chief the surrender thereof with all stores and other effects, both public and private, into your hands. Such of the inhabitants as will pass their parole may be permitted to remain in quite possession of their houses, but all the subjects of France, either within the French factory or in their places within the limits of your authority who shall refuse or evade to give their parole are to be seized and made prisoners.

In case of a refusal to deliver up the factory as demanded, you will immediately take possession by force.

You will cause an inventory to be made of all the effects which shall be delivered up and transmit a copy of the same to us, taking proper care to preserve them untouched.

We are, etc.,
(Signed) { WARREN HASTINGS.
RICHARD BARWELL.
P. FRANCIS.
EDWARD WHEELER.

A true copy,
WM. HUNTER,
Assistant Secretary.

No. 47.

[Received the 27th July.]

To R. LINDSAY.

July 11th, 1778.

SIR,

Unlicensed
Europeans.

I enclose your extract from the Hon'ble Governor and Council's Orders to which I desire your particular attention and obedience. If there are in Sylhet any respectable persons, on whose word you can rely, and who promise immediately to repair hither, there is no occasion for their being accompanied by a guard, but you must insist on their coming to Dacca without any delay, informing them that attempt to elude the order will certainly be followed by their seizure. Any of the lower class, who you imagine are likely to abscond, must be sent down conformably to orders.

I am, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

P. S.—The publication of the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council, of which you have copy enclosed, must first be notified to all the British subjects residing in Sylhet.

Extract of a letter from the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council.

We enclose a publication which you will be pleased to notify to the British subjects within your jurisdiction.

You will also give orders for seizing and securing any other foreigners, not being the known dependents of the Danes or Dutch, and all vagrants of whatever nation; that is to say, persons not having a regular license for their residence in this country, who may be found within the limits of your authority, and transport them immediately to the Presidency under proper guards.

A true extract,
C. BURROWES,
Secretary.

FORT WILLIAM,
The 11th July 1778.

The Hon'ble Governor-General and Council having received certain intelligence that war was declared by the Court of Great Britain against France on the 18th March 1778 in London, and by the Court of France against England on the the 30th of the same month at Paris, the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council do, therefore, notify the same to all subjects of his Majesty under their protection.

War with
France.

By order of the Hon'ble the Governor-General and Council.

J. P. AURIOL,
Secretary.

A true copy.
C. BURBOWES,
Secretary.

No. 48.

To J. P. AURIOL, Esq.,
Secretary.

SYLHET,
The 17th July 1778.

SIR,

I have received your letter of the 15th May, with the different enclosures, but as the Chief and Provincial Council of Dacca do not consider me as a Public Collector, have this day received a letter from them, informing me that they have reason to suppose that you addressed me by mistake, and direct me to transmit no accounts whatsoever to the Presidency without their immediate orders.

Lindsay not
a Public
Collector.

I am, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 49.

DACCA,
The 11th July 1778.

To Mr. ROBERT LINDSAY.

SIR,

The Hon'ble Governor-General and Council having wrote to us for the following accounts for the use of the Khalsah.

Accounts.

Account Settlement.
Kistbundee.
Toujces of Bysaack, Jait and Assar.
Estimate Charges.
Monthly accounts.

We find ourselves unable to comply with these orders from the records in our Sherista, as you have neglected to second class either the Accounts Settlement, Kirbundee or Toujee in the Persian and Bengal languages, for the Sylhet year 1187, although ten months of that year are now elapsed.

We do, therefore, desire that you immediately enable us to comply with the orders above quoted, sending down duplicate copies in Persian and Bengals, one to serve for our records and the other to go to the Khalsah; and in future it must be observed as a standing order that all accounts whatever be accompanied with duplicate copies in the Persian and Bengal languages.

We shall send down to the Khalsah copies of your monthly accounts for 1187 to the end of Asar, inclusive.

As the difference between the price for which the cowries have been sold and the rate at which they stand realised has occasioned some confusion in the Sylhet accounts, we desire you will immediately send down a capable mohur to assist in their adjustment. You will comply with these directions with all possible expedition.

We are, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WM. HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

No. 50.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET,

The 21st July 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

Absconding
Zemindars.

This and the ensuing months being [the] season of the heavy collection in the Sylhet Province, and the close of the revenue of the present year approaching, the Zemindars of Bairahparrah, Chowkee, Minderkondy, Chowallees Tuppah Muzeony and Entah Tuppah Abul Hossain have, according to their usual custom, taken refuge in the Hills to avoid discharging the demands of the Government. I request you will favour me with orders to dispose of one or more of their pergunnahs by public sale, which I have great reason to believe will deter the other zemindars from following the like practices in future.

I am, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 51.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,
Chief of Dacca.

SYLHET,
The 24th July 1778.

SIR,

I am favoured with your letter of the 18th July, respecting the declaration of war between Great Britain and France, with a copy of the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council's orders on the subject, to which I will carefully attend. War with France.

There is not, at present, to my knowledge any subject of France in the Sylhet district. If there are any, I will obey your directions, and order them immediately to proceed to Dacca and surrender themselves to you.

I am, Sir, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 52.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.
(Chief of Dacca).

SYLHET,
The 28th July 1778.

SIR,

I am duly honoured with your commands of the 17th, with the different enclosures, to which I shall pay particular attention and obedience. In a few days I will dispatch to you, under charge of a Havildar and three sepoy, Antonio, a Portuguese, Turner and Reid, Englishmen, and Tureme, a subject of France. Neither of them being persons on whom I have any reliance, I have thought it necessary to send them down under a proper guard. The other Europeans, grechle to the annexed list, having received information of the orders issued at Dacca, in order to elude being called down immediately, absconded from Sylhet, and have taken up their residence in Ponduah and the lands adjacent, which, though without the Company's districts, are tributary to Government. I beg to be favoured with an answer whether your order includes foreigner and British subjects residing out of the districts. Europeans in Sylhet.

I am, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

RAITT, Senior.
RAITT, Junior.
BICKE.
SIGNAY.
DRIVER.
SMITH.
DERICK SMITH.
KENNEDY.
TUREME.
TURNER.
REID.
DIXON.
ANTONIO.
MUNRO.

No. 53.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq., and

SYLHET,

Provincial Council of Revenue.

The 29th July 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

Elephants.

Enclosed I take the liberty of transmitting you a list of the goondah elephants caught in the Sylhet province, during the course of the present year of such that have died and those now remaining. I have demanded from the Darogha stationed here on the part of the Nabob cawns 59,600, being the prime cost of the said elephants due to the zemindars, according to the rates fixed by the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council. In reply, he informs me that, agreeable to the instructions received from His Excellency, one-half of the elephants caught this season on account of the Nizamut, and the other on account of the Company, and the charges incurred in catching and feeding, are to be equally disbursed by both. A division has accordingly been made; and one-half of the elephants are now in my possession. I beg to be favoured with your answer as expeditiously as possible, how they are to be disposed of, as I can neither.....the annual accounts or settle with the khedah mahal zemindars, till I receive your orders on the subject, the zemindars depending entirely on the above sum for discharging the revenues of their pergunnahs now due to the Government.

By the accompanying list, you will perceive that nearly one-half of the elephants caught during the course of the season are dead; from which circumstance, upon making a calculation, I find that these new surviving will cost the Company near Rs. 200 upon their arrival at Dacca, every charge included. The expense of feeding them under my care (the Darogha having refused to take charge of them) I now disburse from the treasury.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

List of Elephants in the Sylhet province from the Month of Kartick to the Month of Bysack 1187.

—	Kallans in Khedahs.	Kallans in Goondahs.	Mianahs in Khedahs.	Khords.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6
	72	5	82	62	221
Dead	32	...	31	43	106
Total remaining	40	5	51	19	115

No. 54.

[Received 18th August].

TO MR. LINDSAY,

DACCA,
The 30th July 1778.

SIR,

We cannot authorize you directly to sell any of the pergunnahs; however we desire that, in any case where a zemindar shall not pay his revenues regularly and shall absent himself, you will let his lands in farm for the remainder of this and for the ensuing year, at the present jumina. If a farmer is not procurable, we must rely on you to take measures for preventing the interference of the zemindar and making the collection direct from the ryots.

We are,
J. SHAKESPEAR.
WM. HOLLOND.
G. HATCH.

No. 55.

[Received 28th August.]

TO MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,

DACCA,
The 4th August 1778.

SIR,

We have received letter of the 27th ultimo enclosing the Sylhet account for Assar, from which we observe that the balance in your Treasury is very large. We therefore desire you will despatch the whole as soon as possible.

We are,
J. SHAKESPEAR.
WM. HOLLOND.
G. HATCH.

No. 56.

• [Received the 3rd September.]

TO MR. ROBERT LINDSAY.

DACCA,
18th August 1778.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 29th July. Whereby it appear that untill the division of the elephants took place, the whole charge of catching and feeding has been disbursed by Nabob's Darogha, but that he has not paid any part of the stipulated price to be allowed to the zemindars for each elephant.

*** The Nabob must certainly be debited for one-half of the original price paid per head to the zemindars, but he must also, on the other hand, have credit with the Company for one-half of the charges defrayed by his Agent.**

We must desire, therefore, that you will immediately proceed to an adjustment of accounts with the Darogha, and, after equally dividing the total amount charges between the Company and Nabob, you will require from Darogha a receipt or certificate from the balance which may appear due from him. The other half you will debit Account Elephants, giving credit to the Sylhet revenue for the amount of the original price allowed to the zemindars. In short the whole expence to the time of the division of the elephants, including every charge must first be clearly and exactly ascertained. One-half whereof is to be charged to the Company and the other to the Nabob; and, to make it more clear, we send a form of an account current, which will serve to guide you.

In respect to the charges for the Company.....received since the partition, you must debit also the Account Elephants, and continue to disburse them from the Treasury, until the further orders, but in this we must recommend you the greatest accuracy, for should they cost the Company 200 Rs. each, it is not improbable that the contractor may reject them, in which case the loss will fall on the Company.

As the Hon'ble Board of Inspection require from us a particular account of the age, height and sex of each elephant, we desire you will transmit as a return accordingly, and also an exact list of tame elephants at Sylhet retained there for the purpose of catching others.

We are, Sir,
J. SHAKESPEARE.
WM. HOLLOND.
G. HATCH.

No. 57.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEARE, ESQ.,
Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue.

SYLUET.

[Not dated.]

GENTLEMEN,

A c c o u n t s .

Your letter, dated the 11th July, I only received yesterday morning. Agreeable to your commands, I have the honour to transmit you the following accounts:—

Duplicate of the Settlement of 1187 in Persian and Bengali.

Kist bundee

ditto

ditto.

Estimate charges from the commencement to the end of the year 1187 in English, duplicate of the same in Persian and Bengali. Towjees for Byssack, Jeyte and of Assar in English. Duplicate of the same in Persians and Bengali.

To complete the payment of the Assar kists, you will perceive a balance of 1,21,182 cawns outstanding, the particulars of which I have taken the liberty to explain, and have the pleasure to inform you that I have the prospect of having it [in] my power to render you a satisfactory account of the revenues at the expiration of the month of Bawdon. Balance of Assar.

I am, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 58.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.
(Chief of Dacca).

SYLHET,
The 4th September 1778.

SIR,

The Zemindar of the Turroff pergunnah having absolutely refused to pay the rent of the Segah and Moujray lands they hold dependent on Sylhet, I have thought it conducive to the interest of the Company to send seapoys upon the said lands, either to compel them to pay their revenues or send a gomastah to Sylhet. Turned per gunnah. Segah and Moujray.

It is necessary for me to acquaint you with this circumstance, in case Zemindars mis-represent the fact, and make use of it as a pretence for delaying the payment of their Kists collected at Dacca.

I am sorry I am under the necessity of troubling you with a complaint against the Aurungpore Zemindars, who, from the great disturbance that they are from Dacca, and their actions not cognizable by the Phouzedary of this Province, openly protect and encourage dekoys to settle in their pergunnah, who have made a practice for sometime past to waylay and plunder the boats coming to Sylhet with treasure, killing the dandies and manjees. Last night Annopong, a deserter from the Chittagong detachment stationed here, and who, from the protection he finds in Aurangpore, has lately taken up his residence in that pergunnah, entered with armed force the town of Sylhet, and broke open a house belonging to Rogu Mullick, from whence he carried everything that was moveable on board of boats provided for that purpose. The neighbourhood being alarmed, he made his escape, after murdering a servant belonging to the family, having run him through the body,with Aurungabad pergunnah, where he now remains. Aurungpore Zemindars harbour dakoits.

. I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 59.

[Received 10th August.]

To THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY
(at Sylhet).

Dacca,
The 6th September 1778.

SIR,

A detachment is now going to Sylhet which will complete the party already there to the number of 50 private and their officers. This you will consider as the relief to the Chittagong detachment, and intimate to the Commanding Officer that he may now join his Battalion conformably to the orders. I Chittagong Detachment.

take it for granted he has received from Captain Ellerker. Should a further reinforcement be necessary, it will be ordered as soon as the arms and accoutrements arrive for the new levies.

I am, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEAR.

No. 60.

[Received the 16th September].

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY

DACCA,

(at Sylhet).

The 8th September 1778.

SIR,

Hatch to form
Settlement
of 1779.

I am directed by the Chief and Council to inform you that they have appointed Mr. George Hatch to superintend the collections at Sylhet¹. That Gentleman will proceed in a few days to his station, in order to form the settlement for the ensuing year, and they hope you will have completed the accounts, and collections by the time he arrives.

Your letter of the 3rd instant and the several enclosures have been duly received.

I am etc.,
C. BURROWS,
Secretary.

No. 61.

[Received the 24th September.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY

DACCA,

(at Sylhet).

The 18th September 1778.

SIR,

Turruph per-
gunnah.

The Chief has laid before us your letter to him of the 4th. The Sijumal at Turruph is now written to give every assistance for the recovery of the rent of the Segah and Mugnasay, lands belonging to the Zemindars of that pergunnah, but dependent on Sylhet, and the purwannah goes under this cover.

We desire you will send us a Persian account of the balance due on this account till the end of the Sylhet year 1187, in case the Sizawul does not immediately remit it to you, that we may take measures for the recovery, but we also request that you will not send any sepoys into the Turruph pergunnah, as it may put the revenue to risk.

We shall take measures in the Phouzdar for putting a stop to the disturbances occasioned by the Aurungpore people, and the Chief will write you further upon the subject with the orders that will be sent from the Phouzdar.

We are, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEAR.
WM. HOLLOND.
G. HATCH.

¹ A five-years Settlement had been formed by the Committee of Circuit in 1772, and the collections were placed in the hands of a farmer: but apparently in 1775, Wm. Hollond, as a member of the Dacca Council, was sent "to effect a settlement with the Sylhet landholders, with powers to assess with revenue, or levy a rent from those lands held on military tenure." (*Lives of the Lindsays* Vol. III, page 163.) Lindsay says the rent roll submitted by Hollond amounted to Rs. 25,000 per annum. But the other members of the Dacca Council "held the settlement in derision." It does not appear that Hatch visited Sylhet. Lindsay (*Op. Cit.*, page 171) refers to "a new member of needy fortune" with a prior claim to the appointment that I then held "being appointed by the Dacca Council to take over charge of Sylhet. Lindsay on receiving intelligence proceeded to Calcutta, and by aid of the influence of the wife of Mr. Justice Hyde, secured not only his office, but independence of Dacca: but this incident must have taken place at a later time. For information concerning G. Hatch, see the *Dinajpur District Records*.

No. 62.

[Received the 4th October.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA,

The 22nd September 1777.

SIR,

The bearer of this is Mr. Templer's¹ Darogha, who goes now to Sylhet, on his part to raise the Company's half share of the elephants caught last year. As Mr. Templer objects to the division, which was made when there was no person on his part to chase for him, we desire that you will cause a new division to take place, leaving the Nabab's and Mr. Templer's Darogha to chase alternately.

Government
Elephant
Agent's
Darogah.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WM. HQ. LOND.

G. HATCH.

No. 63.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,
Chief, and Provincial Council, Dacca.

SYLHET :

The 1st October 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

I am duly favoured with your commands of the 18th September, and so we have the pleasure to transmit you Mr. Richardson's receipts for the different sums paid out of the Sylhet Treasury for the years 1185 and 1186, amounting in all to 1,00,000 cawns of cowries.

There are no accounts or vouchers of any kind in the duffer here for the years 1183 and 1184, when upon Mr. Thackeray's leaving Sylhet, the Public Records were carried along with him, and deposited, I understand, with the Dewan at Dacca.

Records taken
away by
Thackeray.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 64.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,
Chief, etc., Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

The 6th October 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

Accompanying I have the pleasure to transmit you the following accounts and enclosures:—

Accounts for-
warded.

Treasury Account.

Charges Zemindary.

Charges Collection.

¹ For Templer. See Price : *Some Observations and Remarks on a late Publication entitled "Travel in Europe, Asia, and Africa,"* 1782, Pages 68-70.

Charges general of the Sylhet Province for the month of Bawdon, with duplicates of the same in the Persian and Bengal languages :—

	Rs.
No. 1. A bill of exchange drawn by Birjoo Lal Sein or Anan- dram Mullick for G. P. ...	1,687
No. 2. By Mr. Raitt on Mr. Burnett ...	1,500
No. 3. By me on G. Nubby ...	2,000
No. 4. Ditto ditto ditto ...	2,250
No. 5. A receipt of the <i>Nabob's</i> Agent for ...	4,462-8
No. 6. Ditto ditto ditto ...	2,200
No. 7. An Invoice of Treasure ...	14,099
Total ...	24,099
No. 8. An invoice of couries ...	63,000
No. 9. Ditto ditto ...	62,000
Total ...	125,000
No. 10. A bill of exchange drawn by me on Keretraraim ...	1,555-3-16-2

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 65.

[Received the 26th October.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

Dacca

The 5th October 1778.

SIR,

Principles of
ensuing
Settlement.

We desire you will immediately proceed on forming the Settlement of Sylhet for the ensuing year. We must recommend to you to adhere as near as possible to the Bundibust of 1187. No reduction or allotment must be allowed in the jummah of any zemindary or talook without the express sanction of the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council. Should you, therefore, deem any abatement absolutely requisite you must lay before us minutely the particulars on which you ground your opinion of such necessity and wait our reply before you finally conclude.

With all such zemindars and talookdars as are willing to hold their lands upon the terms of 1187, you will finally close. The Settlement is to be only for the term of one year and to be made direct with the zemindars. We have been positively prohibited by the Governor-General and Council to accept any mauzamin, arzarnin or other security in any case whatever. The lands are to be answerable for the rents and to be considered as the only security. For your more particular information, we enclose you a copy of the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council's Orders upon this subject, to which we desire your implicit obedience.

We must recommend to you so to form the Kistbundy that the rents may be punctually paid within the month, and to make the latter kists as light as possible.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WM. HOLLOND.

Circular.

TO MR. JOHN SHAKESPEAR,

Chief, and Council of Revenue at Dacca.

FORT WILLIAM :

The 26th June 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

We desire that you will not on any account whatever demand or accept any security from the Zamindars with whom the settlement of the current year is made, even though the Zemindars themselves should solicit it ; and, if in any settlement already made, any security shall have been accepted for the Zemindars' engagements, that, in such case, you release the security from his engagements, and declare in all cases that the Zemindar's lands shall be security for the payment of the stipulated rents.

We are, etc.,

A true copy,

(Signed) WARREN HASTINGS, etc.

WM. HUNTER,

Assistant Secretary.

No. 66.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEAR, ESQ.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca

SYLHET .

The 15th October 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

Agreeable to your commands of the 22nd ultimo, I have delivered over to the contractor agent 56 elephants, viz., 23 Callans, 25 Mianahs and 8 Khords, and now have the pleasure of enclosing you his receipts for the same. I have also, conforming to your orders, caused a new division to take place, leaving the Nabab's and Mr. Templar's Daroghas to chuse alternately. There remain still five large goondah elephants, of which the Agents on the part of the Nabab refuse to make any division, alledging that the Hon'ble Company have hitherto only claimed one half of the khedah elephants and not of the goondahs. As I find that this has actually been the case, I request to be favoured with instructions whether I am to claim a share or not. I only beg leave to remark that the goondah straggling elephants are of much more services than those in khedahs which are mostly female. There are remaining at Sylhet only nine koonkies or tame she-elephants used for the purpose of catching others.

Elephants.

This number is much too few to attend the different khedahs, and to this alone I ascribe the loss of 100 of the strongest and largest elephants that have died this season. In a former letter I informed the balance that 217 were caught, of which only 112 are now surviving, exclusive of the 5 goondahs. If it is, therefore, the intention of the Hon'ble Governor-General to continue the catching of elephants this ensuing season, I take the liberty of recommending an additional number of 16 koonkies to be kept at Sylhet, of whom the Nabab will furnish one half. There are many old and infirm elephants among these now divided unfit for any other service whatever. I beg to be favoured with your answer on this subject soon, as the elephants will be despatched from Sylhet the end of next month.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 67.

[Received 6th November.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 15th October, 1778.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 1st and 4th instant, and their several enclosures, excepting that there appears on receipt of Mr. Richardson's still wanting to complete the lack of cawns.

We desire that you will send to us a very minute Account of Elephants. In the first place a return of those alive and received on behalf of the Company or Contractor, specifying their names, height, age, and sex. In the next place the particulars of your charges of 29,850 cawns paid to the zemindars, and of 13,250-10 for catching and feeding. We hope by this time the division has been made in presence of the Contractor's Agent, and that the Elephants have been delivered over to him.

We are happy to observe the smallness of the balance, but would have wished you had assigned the reasons, more at large of those balances you deem irrecoverable. We now desire you will furnish us with such an explanation, and for the rest due we trust in your exertions to realize as much as possible.

We have sometime since sent you instructions to make the Settlement for 1188, and hope the business is in forwardness.

We are, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEAR.
W. HOLLOMD.
G. HATCH.

No. 68.

TO J. SHAKESPEAR, ESQ.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

27th October 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

Settlement for
1188 S. Y.

I am duly honour'd with your letter of the 5th instant, and, agreeable to your commands, have taken the necessary steps towards forming the Bundabust of Sylhet for the year 1188, and will conform as far as lies in my power to the orders of the Board.

I would, if possible, avoid making any deviation whatever from the settlement of 1188, but, from the knowledge I have acquired of the collections, find it requisite to submit a few alterations to your considerations.

Notwithstanding I have been fortunate in realizing almost the neat Revenues of the Province for these two years past, some of the Zemindars have been much distressed to pay their rents although it is certain their pergunnahs are not rated higher now than they have been for their many years back; but whether from neglect, the depopulation occasioned by the elephants and tigers, the desertion of the ryotts, account the scarcity of grain, or any particular accidental causes, the lands, I am sorry to say, are in a very waste state, from which it is not possible the Zemindars can recover, unless some ^{Deduction} abatement is made from the present jumma. I beg, therefore, have to request your sanction for a deduction of 25,000 cawn. The sum is small, but, being equally divided among such pergunnahs as are most heavily cessed, will be of considerable relief to the country. recommended.

Enclosed I take the liberty of laying before you a list of the proposed deductions, and will be happy [if] they meet with your approval. I hope to receive your answer soon in order that I may finally close with the Zemindars.

• I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

*List of Deductions proposed to be allowed the Zemindary of the Sylhet Province and for the Jumma of 1187.**

No.		Jumma of C. W. paid for the year 1187.	Proposed deduction.
1	2	3	4
3	E. trahanteo	5,106 7 19 3	300
6	Po. subgar	5,348 4 9 1	400
7	Chaubgant	18,185 0 12 0	770
8	Inchamuttee	2,353 1 19 1	200
10	Deudlee	5,343 9 16 1	200
11	Lunglah Tuppah 5 annas Corbanally...	25,858 3 17 1	500
12	Cunhyhuttee	5,430 1 2 3	600
15	Dinarpore	19,760 13 0 0	500
16	Khitah Tuppah 10 annas motroman ...	10,581 13 8 2	500
17	Bagunt	65 12 17 3	17
19	Chublekal	2,463 13 7 0	260
20	Mottearpore	5,820 8 3 2	500
21	Ganganugur	481 1 17 2	50
24	Shavazpore	5,254 5 7 0	500
27	Shastanayer	9,230 15 6 2	500
29	Coorsah	7,140 11 15 2	500
30	Bahaderpore	6,102 4 3 0	200
42	Entah	12,625 4 9 3	500
43	Shamshernagar	28,440 8 16 3	500
44	Allynagar	17,943 14 1 0	500
45	Dulolly	9,763 10 16 2	500
46	Harrynager	6,089 4 15 0	500
52	Randeegah	875 8 7 0	50
60	AttuaJaun	9,522 3 14 3	500
	Carried over ..	...	...

* M. S. very difficult to decipher.

List of Deductions proposed to be allowed the Zemindary of the Sylhet Province and for the Jumma of 1187—contd.

No.					Jumma of C. W. paid for the year 1187.	Proposed de- duction.
1	2				3	4
	Brought forward	...	...	...	...	...
62	Chowkee	...	...	...	1,953 6 5 1	300
64	Luchypore	...	...	...	4,637 4 5 0	500
69	Gyasanger	...	...	...	675 12 14 2	67
70	Curruah	...	...	...	7,736 15 0 0	500
71	Autgang	...	...	...	3,290 5 2 0	200
72	Silberis	...	...	...	4,430 7 3 2	200
74	Ritchie	...	...	...	1,550 7 5 0	200
77	Mundar candy	...	...	...	8,576 2 0 3	1,000
78	Bareah	...	...	...	6,707 9 15 0	200
79	Aurangabad Badissere	...	...	...	1,999 2 12 0	100
74	Dacca duckin...	...	...	...	9,768 6 19 0	200
86	Puttareah	...	...	...	5,910 18 12 0	200
89	Bazoo Banbharry	...	...	...	2,982 7 3 2	100
90	Cozzachabary...	...	...	...	2,178 8 13 2	100
92	Khalsah Banbary	...	...	...	4,914 18 19 0	200
93	Burlekar	...	...	...	1,055 2 1 2	50
99	Duckingatach...	...	...	...	1,564 10 9 2	100
103	Jelalpore	...	...	...	5,463 1 15 1	300
106	Burumchaul	...	...	...	6,470 12 5 2	500
107	Chowalless	...	...	...	36,919 2 2 2	1,500
109	Bingah	...	...	...	18,078 14 12 1	200
111	Ruffeenager	...	...	...	2,675 3 15 2	100
	Carried over	...	...	...	...	...

*List of Deductions proposed to be allowed the Zemindary of Sylhet Province
and for the Jumma of 1187—concl'd.*

No.				Jumma of C. W. payed for the year 1187.	Proposed deduction.
1	2			3	4
	Brought over	...	...	...	...
117	Barrah parrah	...	...	3,978 8 12 2	400
118	Bentungul	...	...	7,508 4 9 3	200
119	Botal	...	...	4,721 2 0 3	700
120	Jilscoohah	...	...	11,528 4 11 2	300
122	Autgang	...	...	2,671 7 1 3	100
123	Nyagong	...	...	1,140 1 4 3	100
126	Agnah	...	...	3,740 13 14 3	200
127	Juntree	...	...	3,859 13 0 2	100
128	Bazoo Suttarah Sutte	...	...	2,453 1 12 3	50
130	Joinshay	...	...	4,610 1 1 1	100
131	Bunsy koorah	...	...	9,967 8 17 0	200
132	Onchaye	...	...	10,232 4 19 0	300
133	Bazoo Sonootah	...	...	2,951 10 12 3	200
	Tupnah Md. Najaut Banyachung	...	...	16,000 0 0 0	3,000
87	Pancheund Callah	...	...	5,504 6 1 3	150
	Ruzgunge and Rerah G.	...	...	1,417 0 0 0	500
116	Banugantah	...	...	8,758 7 7 2	400
112	Beejoorah	...	...	41,719 3 16 2	500
51	Rayloom	...	...	6,604 6 14 0	200
39	Moherahpore Havilla	...	...	3,002 2 2 1	100
40	Moherahpore Enteh	...	...	958 3 4 3	100
66	Gaharpur	...	...	7,765 14 2 3	500
	Total	...	...	.....	25,004

No. 69.

[Received 1st November.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA :
The 27th October 1778.

SIR,

Military ex-
penditure.

It appears by the Sylhet Treasury Accounts that the amount which has been paid to Lieutenant Foster Bently is Rs. 29,213-0-4, but we have Mr. Bently's receipts only for the sums mentioned in the enclosed list amounting to accounts Rs. 10,205. We request you will immediately transmit to us that Gentleman's receipts for the remainder of the sum. For your guidance you will please to observe that the first charge in the Sylhet account as an advance to Mr. Bently is Rs. 5,078-0-2 entered in the month of Aughan, Sylhet year 1185.

We are, Sir, etc.

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WILLIAM HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

HY. LODGE.

No. 70.

TO J. SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,
Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

6th November 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

Elephants.

I was yesterday favoured with your letter of the 15th ultimo, and agreeable to your commands, now have the pleasure to transmit you a return of the elephants now alive, received on behalf of the Company, specifying their names, height, age, and sex, etc., and will in a few days send you down a minute account of the charges catching and feeding them continued down to the 30th Bawdon, as also the particulars of the charges of 29,850 cawns paid the Zemindary.

Cabil Muhamed, Darogha on the part of the Contractor, who accompanied your letter of the 22nd September and attend[ed] the second division of the elephants, died two days ago. I therefore request you will send up a proper person to take charge of them, or favour me with orders to despatch them to Dacca, when the roads are passable.

I am, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 71.

To J. SHAKESPEARE, Esq.,

Chief and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET:

8th November 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

Having purchased from Mr. Moore,¹ Actg. Attorney for Mr. Thackeray, ^{Thackeray's} the house he built at Sylhet, I take the liberty of requesting you will grant ^{House.} me a pottah for the same or some public vouchers that the Hon'ble Company have no further claim upon the premises; otherwise, I cannot consider Mr. Moore's bill of sale as valid.

I have, etc.,

B. LINDSAY.

No. 72.

To J. SHAKESPEARE, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET,

8th November 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

I am duly favoured with your letter of the 27th October, and agreeable ^{Military ex-} to your commands now take the liberty of enclosing you seven bills drawn by ^{pensidure.} the Chief of Dacca on the Dewan amounting to A. Rs. Rs. 6,139. These are the only vouchers of the different advances made Lieutenant Bently account pay of the Chittagong Detachment remaining in the Sylhet Sherishda, that Gentleman's receipts having been transmitted monthly, according to the accompanying abstract.

The list you mention to have enclosed me, I have not received.

I am, etc.,

B. LINDSAY.

¹ Peter Moore and William Makepeace Thackeray had married sisters. Miss Sarah and Miss Amelia Webb. For a biographical sketch of Peter Moore, the supporter of Sheridan and guardian of Wm. Thackeray, the novelist, see the *Rangpur District Records*. Moore was a hostile witness at the Hastings' impeachment.

SYLHET DISTRICT RECORDS.

*Abstract of Advances made by Lieutenant Bently from the Sylhet Treasury
Account the pay of the Chittagong Detachment.*

1185.		Rs. s. p.	Rs. s. p.
<i>Aughan ...</i>	Paid by the Dewan by order of Mr. William Holland for which no receipt was given.	5,078 2 0	...
<i>Ditto ...</i>	Ditto, in consequence of three bills of exchange drawn upon him by the Chief of Dacca, the same now transmitted Nos. 1, 2 and 3.	2,633 0 0	7,711 2 0
1186	Ditto, the amount of 4 bills drawn upon him by the Chief of Dacca, Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7.	3,506 0 0	...
	Ditto, in consequence of Lieutenant Bently's 9 receipts transmitted monthly.	7,791 0 0	11,297 2 0
1187	Ditto, as for Lieutenant Bently's 12 receipts transmitted by me monthly.	...	10,205 0 0
	Total ...	...	29,213 4 0

N.B.—Lieutenant Bently receipt for the amount appears upon the separate bills of exchange.

SYLHET,

6th November 1778.

No. 73.

[Received the 20th November.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY
at Sylhet.

DACCA:
The 3rd November 1778.

SIR,

We received your letter of the 18th on the subject of elephants. We must desire you will give Mr. Templer's agent any assistance in your power for the despatch of his elephants.

With respect to the koonkies, as it seems to be a matter of immediate concern between the Nabob and Contractor what number shall be retained, we can give you no directions upon the subject. There cannot, however, be a doubt that the catching of elephants is to be continued.

We are, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEAR.
WILLIAM HOLLOND.
M. DAY,
G. HATCH.
HY. LODGE.

No. 74.

[Received the 20th November.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA:
The 3rd November 1778.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 27th ultimo. It is not in our power to allow of any deductions without the express sanction of the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council. We have transmitted your representation to them, and shall recommend it to their notice. In the meantime, you will proceed with your Settlement without delay, and when you shall be convinced of the absolute necessity of an abatement, you will only take a conditional engagement from the Zemindar to remain in force or not as shall be hereafter decided by the Hon'ble Board.

Dacca Council cannot authorise reductions.

We are, etc.

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WILLIAM HOLLOND.

M. DAY.

G. HATCH.

HY. LODGE.

No. 75.

[Received the 20th November.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA,
The 10th November 1778.

SIR,

We enclose you a copy of a letter received from the Accountant-General to the Revenue Department. If any accounts have gone from Sylhet direct to the Presidency, we must remark it as a great irregularity; and desire you will immediately inform us what accounts have been sent, and by what authority; and further we expect that you send no accounts whatever, but through the channel of this Council, in cases of future applications being made to you, which can be only a mistake in the Officers at Calcutta.

Collector not to send accounts to the Presidency.

We are,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WM. HOLLOND.

M. DAY.

G. NATCH.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council at Dacca.

FORT WILLIAM :

The 30th November 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

I have duly received secondary treasury accounts and accounts charges, etc., from the Collector of Sylhet, and, as they are now on the point of being reported upon, I request you will be pleased to acquaint in whether there has been any Establishment formed for the collection of that province, and likewise the dates of the Order of Government authorising the same.

I have, etc.,

CHARLES CROFTES,

Accountant-General to the Revenue Department.

A true copy,

C. BURROWS,

Secretary.

No. 76.

[Received the 20th November.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,

at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 10th November 1778.

SIR,

Collector not to accept Bills of Exchange on the Dacca officers. We now return you two bills of exchange which had been protested. We strictly forbid you in future to accept any bills of exchange upon any of the omalah or officers of Dacca. We cannot give your credit for this amount in your accounts.

We are, etc.

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WM. HOLLAND.

M. DAY.

G. HATCH.

No. 77. •

[Received the 26th November.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,

at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 17th November 1778.

SIR,

Reductions not allowed. The Governor-General and Council will not consent to a reduction of the jumamah of the district of Sylhet. You are, therefore, to allow no abatements whatever.

You will henceforward draw an allowance of 180 rupees per month house rent and charge it in the Sylhet Accounts.

We have received your letters of the 7th and 8th instant.

We are,
J. SHAKESPEAR.
WM. HOLLOND.
M. DAY.
G. HATCH.
HY. LODGE.

No. 78.

To J. SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

The 20th November 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

I am this day favoured with your commands of the 12th November with an enclosure from the Accountant-General to the Revenue Department. Apology for
sending ac-
counts to
Presidency.

In a letter of the 24th June, which I addressed to your Board, I took the liberty of enclosing copy of the instructions I have received from the Secretary to the Public Department, and informed you that I had, in consequence, transmitted to the Governor-General and Council of Revenue Treasury account of Sylhet from the commencement of 1187 to the month of September. In answer to which, you wrote me that the Secretary had addressed me by mistake, and desired that I would desist from sending any accounts whatever to the Presidency in future.

As I have punctually obeyed your commands, I hope you will [not] consider me guilty any irregularity.

I have, etc.,
B. LINDSAY.

No. 79.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

The 20th November 1778.

GENTLEMAN,

I am this day favoured with your letter of the 10th instant, enclosing the two protested bills of exchange, one drawn by me on Kirtnarain for cawns 5,855, 3, 16, 2 balance of the Beejoorah revenues, and the other for cawns 7,169, 12 drawn by Bijoo Lall Sein on Anundiram Mullick, both which sums I will recover and bring to credit in a future treasury account.

Protested
Bills.

Beejorah
pergunnah.

I am under the necessity of informing you that Kirtnarain, the late Wajadar of the Beejorah pergunnah has detained at Dacca Gholam Hyder, one of the chawdries, and all the vakeels of that pergunnah, which will prevent me from furnishing you with the accounts statement of 1188 so soon as I expected, as the zemindars of Beejorah pergunnah have absolutely refused to attend at Sylhet or sign their kistbundee till the chawdries and vakeels who are detained are released.

I, therefore, take the liberty of requesting that you will order them to be sent up under charge of peons, and whatever just demands the late Wajadar may have against them upon an adjustment of their account, I will cause them to pay.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 80.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue at Dacca.

SYLHET :

The 1st December 1773

GENTLEMEN,

Zemindars
refuse to
renew a-
greements.

I was duly favoured with your letter of the 17th November. The zemindars of Barraparah Chowkee and Bingah have absolutely refused to renew their obligations upon the same terms with last year. As you do not think proper to allow of any deduction from the jumma of 1187, I have sent Sezawuls into their respective pergunnahs to collect the revenues from the talookdars and ryotts.

I have now the pleasure to transmit you—

Treasury account.

Charges account.

Charges zemindary.

Charges general for Kartick.

The account settlement of 1188 will follow in a few days.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 81.

[Received the 4th December].

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 24th November 1778.

SIR,

We are yet in want of vouchers for the following sums charged in the Sylhet accounts as paid to the Chittagong detachment, viz :— vouchers required.

	Rs.
Payment in May 1186	873
There are vouchers for Rs. 2,631 paid in this month, but for the amount of Rs. 873 there is no voucher:	
Choito 1186	2,607
Bysack	814, 2
Jaito	875
Assar	873
Sawan	875
Bhadore	875
	<hr/>
	7,791, 2

We must desire you will search for these and send them without delay.

We are,
J. SHAKESPEARE,
WM. HOLLOND,
M. DAY,
G. HATCH.

No. 82.

[Received the 26th December.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 8th December 1778.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 1st instant, with the several accounts therein enclosed, and approve of your having sent sezawulls into the pergunnahs of Burrakparrah, Chokee and Bingah to collect the Revenues immediately from the landholders, though, should the Zemindars at any time wish to resume them upon the terms upon whom they held them last year, we direct that they be put into possession.

Treatment of absconding Zemindars approved of.

We are, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEARE.
WM. HOLLOND.
M. DAY.
G. HATCH.

No. 83.

The 6th January 1779.

To J. SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, etc., Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

Sylhet :

GENTLEMAN,

I was some days ago favoured with instructions from the Secretary to transmit your Treasury accounts from the Sylhet Province.

From May to October 1775 6 months.

From September to August 1777 12 months.

In all 22 months accounts.

Abstract
of
Records.

I took the liberty of informing your Board, in my letter of the 1st October, that during the period of Mr. Thackeray's residence at Sylhet until Mr. Holland's there are no records whatever in this Sherishtah. I am, therefore, unable to comply with your orders further than by transmitting your Treasury accounts for the month of Kartick 1185 or October 1175, also the Treasury accounts for Assin to Bawdon 1186, or from September 1776 to August 1777. In all 13 months.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 84.

Sylhet :

The 10th January 1779,

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Beejoorah
Pergunnah.

Chief of Dacca.

SIR,

I was duly favoured with your letter of the 20th November, informing me that the Vakeels of the Beejoorah pergunnah had presented a petition, claiming the right of paying their rents upon a khord bundabust immediately at Dacca, which had been admitted of by the Board. I now take the liberty of representing to you that Subnarain Bhoë, the late Wadadar, having fallen very considerably in arrears to the Government, I found necessary to depute a Sezawul into the mofussil, who, in the course of a few months, collected the neat rent from the 12 anna Z mindary, but Gholaum Hyder, Chowdrie of the 4-anna division, deserted the pergunnah without making any provision for the payment of his proportion.

At the conclusion of the year, finding that the Security had, previous to his stopping payment of his Kists as they became due, received the full amount of his ruseom, or rather had deducted it from the revenues already collected, I drew upon him, in the month of Bawdon, for the balance due from the said Gholam Hyder, amounting to Cawns 5,855, and transmitted the bill as a remittance to your Board, which was soon afterwards returned to me protested. In consequence of this, I took the necessary steps to enforcing payment of the above sum, to avoid which and to take the power out of my hands, Gittyder, in the name of whole Zemindary presented the Board with a petition to remain at Dacca. Davy Persaud, and the other Chowdries of the 11-anna division are now at Sylhet, and, dissatisfied with the proceedings of the Vakeels at Dacca, have requested of me to lay before them the enclosed arzees, setting forth that they are desirous of remaining at Sylhet and paying their revenues here as formerly.

Five months of the year are now elapsed without one cowrie being yet collected. Unless some steps are taken towards raising the revenues of the pergunnah, I am apprehensive a considerable balance will appear at the conclusion of the collections, exclusive of that of last year still in demand from the 4-anna Zemindary, and which now appears credited in the General Treasury accounts of 1187. I now take the liberty of requesting your orders on the subject, and have the honour to be,

Etc.

B. LINDSAY.

No. 85.

[Received at Dacca, the 20th January 1779.]

Dacca:

The 19th January 1779.

To the Hon'ble Mr. LINDSAY.

SIR,

The Hon'ble the Governor-General and Council having expressed their displeasure at observing so large a balance at the close of the Sylhet accounts for Aghun, we require your utmost diligence to bring up the balance, if it is not already done, in the month of Poose. Collections.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WM. HOLLOND.

M. DAY.

G. HATCH.

HY. LODGE.

No. 86.

[Received the 10th February 1779.]

Dacca :

The 9th February 1779.

TO THE HONBLE MR. LINDSAY.

SIR,

We have desired our Chief to take the necessary measures to place the Zemindars of Beejurah under your authority, and we hope from your assiduity and attention, that you will be able to recover from them, not only the Revenue of the district, but also the balance of last year.

We are, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEARE.
WM. HOLLOND.
M. DAY.
G. HATCH.
HY. LODGE.

No. 87.

JOHN SHAKESPEARE, ESQ.,

Chief, etc., Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

Sylhet :

The 14th March 1779.

GENTLEMAN,

Accounts.

Accompanying I have the pleasure to transmit you the following account and enclosures.

Treasury account.
Charges Collections.
Charges Zemindary.
Charges General.

Toujee account of the Sylhet Province for the month of Phaugun 1188 with duplicate of the same in the Persian and Bengal languages. Also a Bill of Exchange drawn by Mr. Henry Raitt on Matthew Day, Esq.,

for	...	...	...	...	...	Rs.
						2,600

1. Ditto, ditto drawn by Archibald Burnett on Matthew Day, Esq., for

2,300
<hr/>
4,900

Difficulty of remitting Treasury. It was my intention to have accompanied these accounts with the balance of Revenue now in the Treasury amounting to cawns 1,97,000, but finding great difficulty in procuring heavy boats to freight from Sylhet during the months of March, April and May, few merchants chusing to risk their property on the river at this tempestuous season of the year, I have judged it prudent to decline making any despatch of cowries till the commencement of June. In the meantime, I will use my endeavours to purchase and make you a considerable remittance in specie.

I have, etc.,
B. LINDSAY.

No. 88.

[Received the 20th March 1779.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY.

Dacca :

The 12th March 1779.

SIR,

We direct that you immediately prepare an account of the jumma collections, balances of Sylhet, for the 5 years of the Committee's Settlement,¹ agreeably to the form enclosed. It is wanted for Europe and must be done without loss of time. Account of the Committee's Settlement.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WM. HOLLOND.

M. DAY.

No. 89.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEAR, ESQ.,

Chief, etc., Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

Sylhet :

The 5th April 1779.

GENTLEMAN,

I am under the disagreeable necessity of informing you that the incessant rains, which began to fall the 20th March and still continue, have not only prevented the cultivation of the high lands, but laid the low parts of this district many feet under water. Inundations of low country.

The Bocrab Fussil or Bysack crops upon which the Betnugal, Jelsookah, Banyachung, Betal, Luckoy, Silberris, Autgong, Onchail, and Rendceegah zemindars depend for the payment of their revenues is entirely destroyed; and I am sorry to say I do not see the least prospect of completing the collections of these pergannahs; the Sickdars², finding it ineffectual continuing any longer, have already left the mufussil. I therefore beg leave to submit the case to your consideration, and hope, at the conclusion of the year, you will grant remission of some part of the demands of Government.

As this circumstance is only confined to the low country adjacent to Azmeerygunge, from which a lack and sixty thousand cawns is annually collected, a proportional remission will be of considerable relief to the unfortunate inhabitants. Never there was known so much water to have fallen at this early season of the year; from the effects of which the price of grain within the course of a few days has risen 50 per cent.; yet I do not apprehend any considerable scarcity will ensue, if we are fortunate in having a moderate weather the succeeding month.

I have, etc.,

ROBERT LINDSAY.

¹ The Committee of Circuit, June, 1772.

² Sickdars (Shikhdar) a revenue officer appointed to collect the revenue from a small tract of country or estate.

No. 90.

[Received 8th April.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM :

The 24th March 1779.

SIR,

Sir Eyre
Coote.

The Hon'ble Court of Directors having thought fit to nominate and approve Lieutenant General Sir Eyre Coote, K.B., to the vacancy in this Council and Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in India, created by the death of the late Lieutenant-General Sir John Clavering, and His Majesty having been pleased to approve of the said nomination, conformably to the provision made by Act of Parliament in that behalf; we are to inform you that Lieutenant-General Sir Eyre Coote is arrived in Calcutta, and has taken his seat at our Board.

We are, etc.,¹

WARREN HASTINGS.

RICHARD BARWELL.

P. FRANCIS

EDWARD WHEELER.

EYRE COOTE.

No. 91.

TO J. SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,
Chief, Provincial Council of Revenue,
Dacca.

SYLHET DISTRICT

16th April 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

Accounts.

Agreeable to the instructions I received from your Secretary under date 8th December, I proceeded in preparing the amounts demanded of me, *vis.* :—

From September to December 1774	...	4 months.
From May to October 1775	...	6 "
From September 1776 to August 1777	...	12 "

In all ... 22 months' accounts

With my letter of the 6th January, I transmitted you Treasury Account for October 1775 and from September 1776 to August 1777, 13 months' account. For want of necessary vouchers I had it not then in my power to furnish you with the remainder.

¹ Original signatures.

I have since carefully perused the old papers in the Sherishta and am now enabled to comply with the full extent of your orders.

Accordingly I have now the pleasure of enclosing you treasury accounts from September to December 1774 and from May to October 1775—in all two months' accounts.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 92.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief of Dacca.

SYLHET :

6th June 1779.

SIR,

I take the liberty of troubling you with these lines at the solicitation of the Onchail zemindars under Sylhet. They are desirous of preferring a complaint to you against Mahamed Nater Chowdry of Turoff for having on the 19th of the present Bengal month entered their pergunnah with an armed force, and plundered 4 villages, viz., Mirzapore, Sinchapore, Churnam and Doulutpore. From the presentation of the plaintiff I understand several of the inhabitants of the said villages have been wounded in defending their property. As both parties will no doubt appear before you to explain their conduct, you will not only be enabled to form a judgement of the merits of the complaint without my further troubling you on the subject, but ascertain the aggressor.

Disturbance in Onchail pergunnah.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 93.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, etc., Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

26th June 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

The merchants residing at Ponduah under the protection of the Hon'ble Company have presented to me that they have lately not only been insulted, but sustained considerable losses by the Hill Rajahs compelling them to dispose of their goods at an arbitrary price, and have requested of me to take some steps towards protecting them from the like grievances in future. It is

Need of a Fort to protect trade at Ponduah.

Ponduah. unnecessary for me to inform you that the trade carried on between Calcutta and Ponduah has always been considered an object worth the attention of administration, etc., and, in order to protect the merchants, a strong force was kept up at that place and a considerable charge allowed of for peons, Bergandosses, etc., but so large an establishment, being found unnecessary, was together with many others struck off in 1185. There still remained a Bengal Tannahdar, who, as usual, received his appointment from the Resident at Sylhet, and being considered as an officer of Government has hitherto maintaining his influence, and supported the merchants in all their rights and privileges. But for some time past a number of low Europeans residing at Ponduah, by admitting the petty Rajahs to be their superiors than equals, have taught them to consider themselves totally independent of the Company, and infused into them a spirit of independence they had before no idea of, which if (not) checked will be the means of putting a stop to the trade of that market.

In consequence of the representation of the merchants, I went myself to Ponduah and found their complaints but too well grounded. As the only means to prevent the like in future, I beg leave to offer my opinion as a matter conducive to the public good, and request your sanction to erect a small fort surrounded with a brick wall in Ponduah, at which I propose to station a havildar and two sepoys to act under the orders of the Tannahdar. This will not only be a check upon the hill people, but protect the merchants from any future insults; in which they can also deposit their goods—a place of safety.

The charge of erecting this kella I estimate at Rs. 1,000 or Rs. 1,200 at furthest.

I beg leave to propose that a salary of Rs. 30 for month may be allowed to the Tannahdar which I hope you will not consider unreasonable.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 94.

J. SHAKESPEARE, Esq.,

Chief, etc., Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

29th June 1779.

GENTLEMAN,

Enclosed I have the honour to transmit you the following accounts and enclosures :—

Treasury account.

Charges collections.

Charge zemindary.

Charges general.

Taujee account of the Sylhet Province for the month of Jeyte 1788, with a bill of exchange drawn by Mr. Raitt on Mr. Archibd. Burnett for Rs. 1,000 and a receipt of Guzzar Mull, the Nabab's Elephant Darogha, for Rs. 4,112-8.

I have hitherto, as you will perceive by the taujee accounts, nearly realized the full kists as they became due, but am much apprehensive of not being so fortunate the succeeding months, many circumstances having concerned to frustrate and disapprove the industry of the farmers.

In my letter of the 8th April, I took the liberty of informing you of the Bysack crops in the low parts of the district being totally destroyed by the extraordinary fall of rains in the mountains and towards Sylhet. This was succeeded by the 20 days' fine weather, during which time the farmers had planted the greatest part of the high lands. This has also been laid under water by a second inundation, the rice being yet too young upon the surface. A still greater misfortune is the great mortality which still subsists among the cattle: two-thirds being already carried off by an infectious disorder, and in many pergunnahs it has arrived to such a pitch that there actually does not remain a sufficient number to cultivate the lands, the effect of which will be more severely felt the ensuing season. Inundations.

I consider it my duty to inform you of these circumstances, and hope you will take the same under your consideration: in the meantime you may depend I shall not abate my endeavour to realize the revenues of the present year. If I am unsuccessful, in the conclusion, I hope you will ascribe it to the misfortune befallen the country, not to any remissness on my part.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 95.

SYLHET:

2nd July 1779.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief of Dacca.

SIR,

I am again under the necessity of complaining to you against Mahamed Hyatt and Hossein Rezah, zemindars of the Aurungpore pergunnah, for encouraging and protecting dekoys to settle within their jurisdiction, who for some time past have plundered and intercepted many boats bringing revenues to Sylhet. On the 2nd ultimo, the said dekoys entered the Coorua pergunnah and plundered the villages belonging to Immaum Bux, one of the Chowdries, after wounding 5 or 6 of the inhabitants. From thence they proceeded to Mouza Makerchy, in the Luckipore pergunnah, which they not only plundered of the effects and cattle but carried away a ghomastah of the proprietors and a number of the ryotts. Dacoits protected by Aurungpore zemindars.

Enclosed I take the liberty of troubling you with a list of the dekoys now residing in Aurungpore who infest these districts, as they cannot be apprehended without your assistance.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

SYLHET DISTRICT RECORDS.

No. 96.

(Received the 14th.)

Dacca :

10th July 1779.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY.

Balliseerah . This serves to inform you that a 11 as. 3g. 2c. division of Balliseerah has lately been sold at public auction to answer for a deficiency of revenue. Gullaum Ally was the purchaser, but he finds a difficulty in obtaining possession, by reason of the resistance made by former Zemindar, in contempt of authority of the Government, etc. As this pergunnah adjoins to your Province, we request you will afford Gullaum Ally every assistance in your power, by fixing him in the quiet possession of the above mentioned division of it.

We are, etc.,

WM. HOLLAND.

G. HATCH.

No. 97.

SYLHET :

14th July 1779.

TO WILLIAM HOLLAND, Esq.,

Acting Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

GENTLEMEN,

Seegah and Moujray lands. I find myself under the necessity of representing to you the great difficulty I find in collecting the revenues of the Seegah and Moujray lands and the continual disputes subsisting between the proprietors, owing to the extent and boundaries of their respective premises now having been exactly ascertained.

They are in all near 1,500 individuals, who held grants under the seals of the former Dewans of the Sylhet province for small portions of lands allotted for particular services done to Government from 10 to 500 cawns jumma, but this establishment being found altogether unnecessary in 1185 the land were resumed and continued to the proprietors as talookdars. Among them are many who hold sunnads, and, although not in actual possession of the premises therein specified, continue to pay the demands of Government rather than give up their claim, while others of more influence, by gradual encroachments, have possessed themselves of double quantity they are entitled

to from their grants. While no rents were collected from the lands, few complaints were made, but since they are cessed with a revenue at so much per begah which is collected from the proprietors, whether in a state of cultivation or not, he now begins to enquire for the full extent of lands specified in his sunnads which he did not think before worthy his attention, only cultivating such proportion of ground as produces grain sufficient for the immediate consumption of his own family. The majority of the proprietors, sensible of the many inconveniences they now labour under, have presented me with a petition to have their lands measured, and, when finished, an equal assessment made, and marks fixed between their respective premises to prevent future disputes.

*Desire to have
lands mea-
sured.*

Innumerable disputes are daily preferred to which, for the foregoing reasons, it is impossible for me to redress till a measurement takes place, and now [I] take the liberty of requesting your permission to carry it into execution.

That proprietors have been farther induced to present me with the above petition from an apprehension they entertain that the lands, which from long possession they now consider as their hereditary property, will at some future period be delivered over to the zemindars upon becoming responsible for the Revenues, and are in hopes, when a measurement take places, that the land will be then confirmed to their.....upon a more solid footing than at present.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 98.

SYLHET

29th July 1779.

To WILLIAM HOLLAND, Esq.,

Acting Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

GENTLEMEN,

Agreeable to your commands of the 10th instant, I immediately despatched a Havildar and 10 sepoys to put Gholaum Ally in possession of the 11-3-2 Division of Baleserah Pergunnah purchased by him at public auction. On their arrival at the cutcherry, they found that Mahommed Reza, the late proprietor, had assembled upwards of 10,000 men armed with matchlocks, bows, and spears, to oppose their landing. Upon the parties endeavouring to carry into execution the Order of Government, they were fired upon, two dandies killed, and several wounded : upon which the party was under the necessity of retreating, and are now returned to Sylhet for a re-inforcement. The ensuing day, two boats bringing to Sylhet 10,000 cawns of cowries, the revenues of the Bejoorah Pergunnah, brought to in the dusk of the evening at the cutcherry of Chokee, the 6 annas Division of which Mahammed Reza is also the proprietor. A few minutes after, he assembled his ryotts, who plundered the boats of their cargoes, which they immediately transported to Baleserah. This, I am afraid, will be a dead loss to Government, as the Bejoorah zemindars will not have it in their power to replace so large an amount before the conclusion of year, there being yet a very considerable balance outstanding.

*Disturbances
in Baleserah
pergunnah.*

Mahamed Rezah is, not only supported by the remaining 5 anna Zemindar of Baleeserah, but I have received certain information that he has received private assistance from all the neighbouring zemindars, both under Dacca and Sylhet, and is encouraged in opposing the orders of the Administration.

With the above sum he has also been enabled to assemble and entertain a very formidable body of dekoys and hill people to way-lay the Revenue, on which account the collections of all the neighbouring pergunnahs are at present entirely at a stand.

I have now despatched a party of 20 sepoy's commanded by a Subadar with 25 bergondosses, not only to enforce your orders, but also to attempt the recovery of the money that is robbed and to apprehend the Chowdry.

I now request your permission to dispose of Mahamed Rezah's talooks in the Chokee Pergunnah of 600 cawus jumma, he having only paid 100 during the course of the year.

He is a notorious dekoys, and this will be the means of deterring the Zemindars from following the like unwarrantable practice in future. As it will be necessary for some months to continue a small party in the Baleeserah pergunnah to protect Gholaum Ally in his purchase, and establish peace in the mofussil, I beg leave to recommend that a Havildar and 10 sepoy's may be despatched from Dacca, there being at present hardly a sufficient number at Sylhet to mount the necessary guards, the remainder being either stationed at the Tannahs of Lahore, Bongong, Ponduah, and Chattaek or upon command in the pergunnahs.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 99.

[Received the 2nd August.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA :
The 30th July 1779.

SIR,

Measurement of lands sanctioned. We have duly received your letter of the 8th June accompanying a list of boats, said to contain 145,000 cawns of cowries which are arrived safe. When they have been counted to our Kazanchy, a receipt shall be transmitted you for the amount.

We have also received your letter of the 14th instant. We consent to your making a measurement of the Segah and Mujoy lands ; as from your representation it appears to be absolutely necessary, but we must request that you be particularly careful and attention to prevent any persons employed in the business from abusing the trust reposed in them, as measurements are often productive of oppression.

We are, etc.,
WILLIAM HOLLAND,
G. HATCH.

No. 100.

(Received the 19th August 1779.)

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 10th August 1779.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 29th ultimo, and approve of your having sent a Subadar, twenty sepoy, and twenty-six burkundasses into the Baleeserah pergunnah to establish Gullam Ally in his purchase and to endeavour to secure the treasure, which Mahomed Reza, the late zemindar of that pergunnah, is accused of having robbed. We further direct that you take every means to apprehend Mahamed Reza, and that you will send him under a guard to Dacca, in case you meet with success. Military sent to the Baleeserah pergunnah.

With respect to the talook he holds in the Chokee pergunnah, we have written now to the Governor General and Council, requesting their sanction for the public sale of it, which we have no doubt of obtaining.

We cannot at present spare any sepoy from Dacca. We must, therefore, request that you will continue a small party there until Gulaum Ally shall have obtained firm and peaceable possession of his purchase.

We are, etc.,

WILLIAM HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

No. 101.

TO WILLIAM HOLLAND, Esq.,

Acting Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

SYLHET :

18th August 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

I am this day favoured with your commands of the 10th August.

The party I despatched into Baleeserah pergunnah, after meeting considerable resistance on the part of the Mahamed Reza, the late zemindar, put Gholauum Ally in possession of his purchase. Baleeserah.

I have since recalled the detachment, leaving a Havildar and ten sepoy till such time as peace is established in the mofussil. Mahomed Reza has yet eluded my endeavour to seize him, but I have apprehended the Mangy¹ with several dekoys, who were on board his boat and assisted in plundering

(Manghi) the steersman or master of a native river-craft.

the Bejoorah pergunnah revenues. In a few days I shall take the liberty of transmitting you abstract of the proceedings of the Phogedary Adawlut on the subject, from which it is uncontestedly proved that Mohamed Rezah was personally concerned in the robbery.

I have, etc.,

ROBERT LINDSAY.

No. 102.

(Received 29th.)

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :

25th August 1779.

SIR,

I have received your letter of the 2nd ultimo, enclosing a list of decoits now residing in the Aurungpore pergunnah. As the pergunnah is nearer Sylhet than Dacca, I request you will send a party of sepoy into it to seize these decoits, and, in case they should meet with success, you will please to make them over to the Fougedary Adawlut at Sylhet, in order that they may then take their tryal.

I have repeated complaints of boats being stopped at a gaut in the Luckoy pergunnah. I request you will warn the zemindars that if any further complaint is made upon this subject, they must answer it by a public sale of their pergunnah.

I am, etc.,

WILLIAM HOLLOND.

Acting Chief.

No. 103.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 2nd September 1779.

SIR,

We herewith transmit to you copies of two letters, one for the Governor General and the other for the Nabob Mobarak-ul-Dowla, and request your answer to the charges contained in the latter.

Charges
against
Lindsay by
the Nawab
Nazim.

We are, etc.,

WILLIAM HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEARE, Esq.,

Chief and Member of the Provincial Council of Dacca.

FORT WILLIAM :

19th August 1779.

SIR,

I enclose you translation of a letter which I have lately received from the Nabob Mobarrek-ul-Dowlah¹ and must desire that you will immediately call upon Mr. Lindsay to answer to the point with which he is therein charged, and that you will give directions that the Nabob's elephants be immediately returned, and no uncustomary demands or other obstruction in future be given to the Nabob's officers employed there in catching elephants, but every proper assistance afforded them.

I am, etc.,

A true copy,
C. BURROWES,
Secretary.

(Signed) WARREN HASTINGS.

FROM THE NABOB MOBARACK-UL-DOWLAH.

Received 16th August 1779.

From the time when you were kindly pleased to give the elephant Kheddah at Sylhet to the Nizamut, no one of the gentlemen or of the officers of the District has ever till lately given the least molestation or hindrance to the business of the Kheddah, but, on the contrary invariably given assistance and support thereto, but I now learn from an Arzee from the Darogha of the said Kheddah that Mr. Lindsay, the Zilladar of Sylhet, has forcibly taken from the said Darogha the Nizamut decoy elephants with which the Company have nothing to do, and placed them in the Company's Pheel Khanua² at Sylhet.

It has been an invariable practice since the business of the Kheddahs commenced that, when the elephants are encompassed in the Kheddah, the Zemindar's officer receives a stated price for the large and middle sized amongst them, but the small ones are never brought into the account. Last year the Chief of the District on the application of the Zemindar's officer pressed the Darogha of the Kheddah to this payment of a sum for the small ones likewise, and he also wrote to me on the subject. I wrote for answer that, according to established custom, the small elephants were never brought into the account. In reply to this, the Gentleman wrote me that he had engaged with the Zemindar's officer for that year and requested I would cause it to be paid that year, and that in future it should be discontinued. I, therefore, from a desire to oblige that Gentleman caused a price last year to be paid for the small elephants, and this year the requisition has been renewed.

¹The Nawab Mobaruku U-Daula, son of Mir Jafir by Baboo Begum became Nawab Nazim at the age of 12 in 1770. Munny Begum was appointed his guardian. Mobaruku U-Daula died in 1779, vide P. C. Majumdar: *The Musnud of Murshidabad*, page 42.

²Pheelkhana = *Fil-khana*, an elephant stable.

As the business of the Khedah is at a stand for want of these elephants which have been seized, and the season for entrapping the elephants is elapsing and the making payment for the small elephants is absolutely contrary to established customs, and detrimental to me in the highest degree, I therefore request that, having a regard to your own Regulations, you will be so obliging as to send me two letters, one to Mr. Lindsay and the other to Mr. Shakespear, directing that the elephants above mentioned may be restored, the uncustomary price for the small elephants may be dropped, and in future every kind of assistance and support be afforded the Daroga that the business of the Kheddah may not be further injured, nor discredited in the eyes of the people.

No. 104.

SYLHET:

[8th September 1779.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Dacca.

GENTLEMEN,

Disputes between the Nawabs and the Government's elephant Agents.

I am favoured with your letter of the 2nd instant, enclosing copy of complaints preferred against me by the Nabob Mubarick-ul-Dowlah (1), first for seizing the dekey elephants of the Nizamut and placing them in the pheel khanah of the Company, secondly for molesting his agents, and lastly for making unusual demands for small elephants.

In answer to the former of these charges, I must inform you that there are 11 coonkeys or dekey elephants at Sylhet, the immediate property of the Company. The other khedah elephants caught during the season are equally divided between the Nabob and the Contractor; one-half of these coonkeys are set apart to attend the elephants of the former and the remainder those of the latter.

When the rains are over these elephants are again assembled, and sent into the hills to attend the khedahs. The Nabob, no doubt, has been misinformed as to these particulars, or he would not have made this a subject of complaint. I now beg leave to be favoured with your orders whether or not the Contractor is to be supplied with the usual proportion of tame elephants, and at the same time take the liberty of venturing to represent, if he is deprived, his business at Sylhet must be entirely at a stand. I also beg leave to be informed whether the Contractors' agents are at liberty to catch goondah and stragling elephants, as the Agents of the Nabob make objection, and represent that they hold an exclusive privilege from Government.

As to my having molested or obstructed the Nabob's Agents in the prosecution of their business, I declare on my honour it is totally false, and without foundation. So far from having acted in this manner, I have, conforming to your orders, afforded them every assistance in my power, and I am

afraid more so than altogether consistent with propriety. With regard to the latter complaint of making unusual demands for small elephants, the explanation is thus:—

It has generally been customary to return to the zemindars the khord or small elephants, and they distributed in charity either to the Sinassees¹ or among the different mosques, or disposed of them in any other manner they thought proper. In 1777 the Nabob's Agent took them from the zemindars without allowing any acknowledgment or compensation whatever for their trouble. The consequence was the ensuing season the zemindars absolutely refused making khedahs or going a hunting into the hills, nor could I by any means persuade them, till having obtaining the consent of the Nabob's Agents, I promised an allowance of Rs. 20 for each small elephant or that they should be returned to the zemindars as usual. The Nabob soon after wrote me an unpolite letter on this subject. In my answer, I informed him that I had studied his interest, not my own, and that the sum of Rs. 300 paid to the zemindars was no means worthy of alteration, and to avoid giving him any uneasiness or me further trouble, I would myself replace it.

I beg leave to represent to you that during the Mogul Administration, and for many years past, the established wages of coolies for attending the khedahs and providing grass for the elephants was 8 annas per month. For this consideration they voluntarily entered into service, but, as the necessities of life have been gradually increasing all over Bengal and are now several hundred per cent. dearer than at those periods, the price of labor must rise in proportion, and coolies are not now to be procured at Sylhet by individuals under Rs. 2 per month.

The Nabob's Agents do not consider the matter in this light, and I submit to your judgment whether 6 annas per month, the neat sum at present paid by the Nabob's agents to the coolies, after deducting russum² and other impositions, is an equivalent, or can possibly prove any subsistence to a labourer and his family. The consequence is that the greatest oppressions have been committed and security exacted from the coolies to serve upon these arbitrary terms, and, I am sorry to say, I have obliged to exercise severe means to prevent a total stop being put to the Nabob's business and his elephants dying for want of provender. The Contractor's Agents, to put a stop to the continual complaint of the ryotts, have made a proportional increase in the wages of the monthly servants, but the Agents of the Nabob, jealous of the smallest innovations, have declined following the plan or deviating a single cowrie from a long established regulation. As a precedent has been shown, and the price of the rice at this period (is) remarkably dear, the Agents of the Nabob find more difficulty than ever in finding coolies to attend at the former rate of wages, and, as they consider it my duty to supply them upon their own terms, I make no doubt there will be the subject of a second complaint.

I must now conclude my letter by remarking that the Nabob's Agent has been for irregularities and impositions successively dismissed and replaced ten times in the course of two years. He ought not therefore put implicit belief on the representation of a set of people on whom he himself can place so little confidence when entrusted with his own immediate concern.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

¹ Sanskrit *Sannyasi* lit. "one who resigns"—a Hindu mendicant.

² Customary or enforced commission.

No. 105.

SYLHET.

29th September 1779.

JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue, Daoca.

GENTLEMEN,

Petitions
of zemindars
in Calcutta.

Since you did me the honour to depute me to superintend the collections of Sylhet, the welfare of the Province, and to merit the confidence placed in me, have been my constant study. With this view I have directed my attention, not only to the realizing of the revenues, but also towards the relief of the zemindars by reducing the exorbitant interest of money and redressing many irregularities practised by the inferior officers employed in the collections: in both which I have fortunately succeeded, and I flatter myself my conduct has hitherto been considered in a favourable light by my Hon'ble Employers, and that I have acquitted myself to the satisfaction of the natives in general. Yet I am informed that there are a number of vakeels and disaffected persons who, without going through the regular channel of complaining to your Board assemble in the public streets of Calcutta, and, in a clamorous manner, accuse me of actions the reverse of the general tenure of my conduct and repugnant to the character I shall ever wish to support. I need not inform you of the extremely turbulent and litigious disposition of the Sylhet Province, as several members of your Board from experience must be fully acquainted with it. I only beg leave to represent to you that those persons who take upon themselves the title of the Sylhet zemindars and reside constantly in Calcutta are vested with no authority whatever. Their constant business is to complain against the Acting Resident and gain their livelihood by granting razenamahs¹ for the different offices under the collections to particular persons who are weak enough to consider this as the means of finding employ, and in hopes of gaining their purpose instigate the vakeels to complain against the present incumbent.

As it is disagreeable circumstance to have my name called in question and actions laid to my charge, when I am conscious of having acted no otherwise than consistently with my duty, I take the liberty of requesting, if you consider it consistent with propriety, that you will transmit copy of my letter to the Hon'ble Governor General and Council, hoping that the Hon'ble Board will either order the parties to be referred to you or the Superintendent of the Khalsa² to take cognizance of their respective complaints.

I have, etc.,

B. LINDEAY.

¹ Razinama, a voluntary release, a testimonial of satisfaction.
² Khalsa—the Exchequer, or office of the Revenue Department.

No. 106.

(Received 26th September 1779.)

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 7th September 1779

SIR,

We direct that you sell at public auction the talook in your district which belonged to Mahamed Reza, late zemindar of Ballyseerah.

We are, etc.,

WM. HOLLOND,

G. HATCH.

No. 107.

J. SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, etc., Provincial Council of Revenue,

Dacca.

SYLHET :

The 1st October 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

Enclosed I have the pleasure to transmit you General Treasury and Jumma Wassil Baukee accounts of the Sylhet Province for the year 1788. Accompanying I also taken the liberty of laying before you the particulars of the balance of cawns 40,745 now outstanding. As I have exerted my utmost endeavour to lessen this without effect, I shall be happy to find you are satisfied with the explanation, and do not impute to any want of attention on my part it not being reduced to a smaller sum. Accounts.

In my letters of the 8th April and 29th June, I was under the disagreeable necessity of informing you the Bysack and only crop produce upon the low lands of the Province was almost entirely destroyed by an extraordinary fall of rain, which commenced the 24th of March and continued without intermission till the 14th April. This, being followed by an infectious disorder among the cattle, has reduced the farmers to the utmost distress, the effects of which will be more severely felt the ensuing season, as in many of the pergunnahs there actually do not remain cattle sufficient to cultivate the lands. From these concurring circumstances, I have hitherto had the most unfavourable prospect of completing the collections: my succeeding there fore in realizing so considerable a proportion of the revenues has exceeded my most sanguine expectations, which nothing but an unremitted application could have effected. Distress of the cultivators.

Special diff-
culties of
collection of
Revenue in
Sylhet.

Having already, at the conclusion of the last settlement, taken the liberty of recommending a small deduction from the present Jumma, and not meeting with the approbation of the Hon'ble Governor General and Council, it would be improper on me to trouble you with a second application, but I cannot help again representing to you that several of the pergannabs are overated, and, from the exertions made use of to collect the rents for these two years past, many of the talookdars and ryotts have deserted their lands. I am on this account apprehensive that several of the zemindars will decline renewing their obligations, nor will any person venture to take them in farm during the present assessment.

From a general view of the Sylhet Province, which includes so very extensive tracts of country, it would appear it is not so highly cultivated in proportion as many other districts of Bengal, but I would not inform you that not $\frac{1}{3}$ of the whole capable of cultivation is the property of the zemindars, the rest being either Jaghire Burmatra¹ Muddut maasah, etc., lands untaxed under different denominations by Government.

A great difficulty attending the Collector of the Revenue is owing to the multiplicity of zemindars and proprietors to each pergunnah, who consume the rents collected from the ryotts in the maintenance of them-selves and family in all its branches, who, though many generations removed from the original stock are, according to the custom of the Province, all considered as joint partners and as such, claim their respective proportion. Their inability to comply with the demands of Government is further owing to having, for trifling considerations of ready money, disposed of considerable portions of their hereditary lands upon Khaulge Jumma² or exempt from revenues for which the zemindars, yet responsible, though not in possession of the lands, upon which the taxation is formed. The present possessors would still be liable to be called upon for their proportion of the rents, but they have in general avoided this by obtaining charity Sunnuds for the lands so purchased under the seals of the former Dewans of Sylhet.

A great check and almost total obstacle to the cultivation of the Sylhet Province, by which the Zemindars might be [enabled to] fulfil their engagements with more ease than at present, is owing to the following causes. During the Mogul Administration, and till within these very few years, the mode of forming the settlement and taxing the Province was by measuring the lands of each pergunnah, and the taxation formed on only such proportions as were in a state of cultivation, and had produced a crop during the year the assessment was formed. The property of the lands so cultivated is clearly ascertained and registered in the Canongoes' Dafter and Tukseem³ papers of the pergunnah, in the name of the respective proprietors. In this manner these lands have descended from one generation to another without the cultivation being either immediately increased or diminished. But in the public registers, both at the Mofussil and Sudder⁴, no mention whatever is made of the waste or such other lands as had not been included with the last measurement. It is, therefore, impossible to form any judgement, so as to ascertain the separate property of each partner, as a division never took place. No individual will, therefore, go to any expense or sacrifice a little trouble in cleaning and cultivating these lands, as he is certain as soon as he begins to reap the fruit of his industry, the other partners, jealous of his prosperity, immediately become his enemy, and claim their share of the profits. I am now using my endeavours

¹ Jaghir Burmatro — *Brahmottara* lands granted to Brahmins and their descendants as an act of religious charity. Maddut maasah (correctly *Maddad-maash*) an assignment of revenue for the support of pious or learned persons.

² Khaulge jumma — *kharij-jama*, detached from state rental.

³ Tukseem = *Taksim*, a share or revenue subdivision.

⁴ Mufussil = country. Sadder = Headquarters.

to obviate their objections by persuading the chowdries and partners to the zemindary to effect a measurement of the waste lands among themselves, appropriating to each their respective proportions; by which means the Sylhet Province would soon be in a much higher state of cultivation than at present; but from the multiplicity of proprietors, family dissensions, and other obstacles to prevent this arrangement, I am afraid it will never take place without the immediate interposition of Government. As most of the Provinces of Bengal have had small deductions allowed them for these two years past, I hope you will excuse the liberty I take in representing to you that the Sylhet Zemindars are much dissatisfied, and impute their not meeting with the like indulgence to my having omitted making the necessary applications. I hope you will, therefore, lay the case before the Hon'ble Governor General and Council. If a remission of but 20 or 25,000 cawns was granted by the Hon'ble Board, it would enable me to satisfy such as are the most clamorous, and have it the least in their power to comply with the demands of Government.

Request for reductions.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 108.

JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue,
Dacca.

SYLHET:

15th August 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

Accompanying I have the pleasure to transmit you Treasury Account.

Charges collections.

Charges zemindary.

Charges General of the Sylhet province for the month of Kartick 1189 with duplicates of the same in the Persian and Bengal languages.

The Bengal holidays falling this year so late as November, by preventing the zemindars from leaving the mofussil in order to renew their engagements, is the cause of my not having yet concluded the present Settlement. The failure of the crop and loss of cattle I am afraid will throw the collections much in arrear for the first three or four kists of the season.

Cause of delay in completing the Settlement.

Understanding that Mahomed Rezak, late Chowdry of Balisseerah, is apprehended at Dacca, I have recalled the sepoy and bergandasses stationed in that pergunnah.

Balisseerah.

I have, etc.

R. LINDSAY.

No. 109.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA:

21st October 1779.

SIR,

Abatement
recommended
by Dacca
Council.

We have received your three letters under date the 1st October, with the several papers mentioned to be enclosed in them. We are sorry to observe that so large a balance has this year fallen in the Sylhet province, but at the same time we are satisfied that you would not omit to exert your utmost endeavours to realize the whole of the revenues. We shall, therefore, recommend to the Governor General and Council, to remit the arrears due from the zemindars.

We propose also to forward to the Governor General and Council your letter representing the necessity of granting an abatement of revenue in your province, and to recommend them to allow of between twenty and thirty thousand cowns of cowries; but this need not delay your Settlement for the present year which you will please to form without loss of time, upon the same terms as that of the last; and you must acquaint such zemindars as are most in want of a remission that their cases have been represented to the Governor General and Council, and, should they be pleased to grant them any abatement, you will hereafter deduct the amount from their engagements.

We are, etc.,

WILLIAM HOLLOND,

Hy. LODGE.

No. 110.

TO WILLIAM HOLLOND, Esq.,

Acting Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue,
DACCA.

SYLHET:

3rd November 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

Disturbances
in Balasore-
rah pergun-
nah.

Agreeable to your commands of the 11th July, I immediately detached a party of 2 havildars, 12 sepoys and 30 Bergondasses to put Gholaum Ally in possession of the 11-anna division of Balaseera purchased by him at public sale. At present, Mahomed Rezah, the late Zemindar, opposed their landing, showed some resistance, but on the discharge of a few pieces of musquetry he retired, and for some time resided in Turoff under the protection of Keaz-ul-Bamah.

During the month of Sawon and Bawdon, there was no disturbance whatever happened : to all appearance the new purchaser having acquired full authority in the mofussil. Judging it, therefore, an unnecessary expense, I withdrew the burgondasses.

But on the 8th of last month, a few hours before day-break, Mahomed Rezah unexpectedly returned with a body of 5 or 600 men and surrounded the Cutcherry, which he set a fire. Such of the sepoyas as attempted to make resistance were immediately cut down or shot; the remainder, being taken by surprise, were made prisoners and deprived of their arms and ammunition. Jadunundun, the Sickdar on the part of Gholaum Ally, was tied up to a tree, and, after beating him in the most barbarous manner, Mohamed Rezak cut off his ears. What he has since done with him is uncertain, but it is reported in all the adjoining pergunnahs that he was put to death. Immediately on the receipt of this intelligence, I despatched from Sylhet a Havildar, 10 sepoyas and 30 bergondasses. On their appearance, Mahomed Rezak again retired.

From the time of his plundering the Bejoorah revenues, I have had harcarrahs in continual search of him without being able to ascertain his place of residence; it appearing that, fearful of being apprehended, and for his personal safety, with few or no attendants, he changed his habitation almost every day.

It is, therefore, highly improbable a person in his situation and pointed at as a notorious dekoyt, without private assistance, could have assembled so considerable a force. The servants of Gholaum Ally directly charge Reazul-Ramah, zemindar of the 6-anna division of Baliseerah, with having furnished him with people. It is certain for several days, after the action was committed, there was a friendly correspondence between both, without the former's meeting any molestation whatever, and then, finding he could no longer continue in the Baliseerah pergunnah with safety, he retired to Reazul-Rahmah's home in Turoff, where he also met with his protection. From these and many other concerning circumstances, there is more than a probability that he was concerned.

I have, etc.,

B. LINDSAY.

No. 111.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue,
Dacca.

SYLHET :-

20th December 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

Accompanying I have the pleasure to transmit you Kistbundee and Settlement for Settlement of Sylhet for 1189. The Bengal holidays falling this year as late as the month of Kartik have prevented me from closing these accounts sooner. 1189.

I must also inform you that the loss of cattle and failure of the crop has so much distressed the Zemindars that I have found the greatest difficulty in bringing them from the mofussil to renew the engagements. Those of the Betal, Muzcoory, Mundarkondy, Jayanshy, Barraparrah, and several other pergunnahs bordering upon the lower part of the district have absolutely refused signing their tahuts upon the same terms as last year. I have, therefore, deputed sezawuls to collect the rent from the ryotts.

Having in several of my former letters informed you of the actual state of the province and of the great losses sustained by the inhabitants, first by inundation, and secondly from the mortality among the cattle, I will trouble you no further on the subject, and only take the liberty of informing you that neither attention or application shall be wanting on my part to realize the revenues of the present year. If I am unfortunate in the conclusion, I sincerely hope you will grant me the indulgence of representing the case to the Hon'ble Governor General and Council in order that I may not undeservedly incur their displeasure.

Measurement
of resumed
lands.

Agreeable to your permission and the unanimous consent of the proprietors, I have proceeded to measure the lands upon the Segah and Moujray establishment, and hope it will be finished in the course of months when I will transmit you the particulars.

It is proper I also inform you that it is impossible any conclusion can be made use of by the officers employed on this business as the Nul* is followed by many hundred individuals, each party being a check upon his neighbour and obliging him to produce what lands he may have secreted in order to reduce their respective proportion of the revenues according to the present assessment.

I have, etc,

B. LINDSAY.

No. 112.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,

Resident at Sylhet.

Dacca :

30th November 1779.

SIR,

Habiganj.

We enclose you a petition from the Zemindar of Turruff setting forth that Amed Reza, Zemindar of Bonnia Chawn in the Sylhet district, has erected a new haut so close to his principal gunge, called Habeeb Gunge, as totally to destroy and ruin the same. We direct, therefore, that should the haut of Amed Reza have been erected or commenced since the Bengal year 1178, it be immediately discontinued and abolished.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR,

WM. HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

No. 113.

[Received 20th December 1779.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 13th December 1779.

SIR,

Enclosed we transmit you copy of a letter received from the Accomptant-General to the Revenue Department. You will observe that you must in future transmit in duplicate copies three Monthly Treasury Accounts, and also duplicates of your Accounts Charges, and that these must be kept in Sicca Rupees and Cowries, as directed by the Accomptant. The valuation must be made at cawns four and puns four, the arcot rupee. We desire that you will lose no time in sending to us the accounts of the year 1188 complete, drawn out in the manner prescribed by the Accomptant-General. For your guidance as to Monthly Treasury Accounts, to be drawn out in the new form, we transmit you one of those usually sent from hence. Accounts.

Your Running Treasury Accounts for the English month so exactly corresponds with your Treasury Accounts for the Bengal months (the dates of the receipts and payments in both being omitted), that we cannot make out the accounts here according to the new form. You must be cautious in this respect in future.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WM. HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

TO JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,
Chief, and Provincial Council at Dacca.

FORT WILLIAM :

The 2nd December 1779.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received the favour of your letter of dated the 12th November, inclosing the General Treasury Account and Jumma Wasil Bakey of Sylhet for the Sylhet year 1188 or Bengal year 1185. I am to request that you will be pleased to transmit the monthly Treasury Accounts for that period with the particulars of the charges, likewise monthly Treasury Accounts agreeable to the new form, from the beginning of the Sylhet year 1188 to the present time, showing the receipts and disbursements agreeable to the English and Sylhet style; and that you will be pleased, in future, to transmit monthly three Treasury Accounts of the Sylhet Province to the Presidency accompanied with the Dacca accounts, viz.—Accounts.

Treasury Account and Account Charges to be sent to the Board of Revenue.

Monthly Treasury agreeable to the new form to be sent to my office.

Running Treasury Accounts agreeable to the new form to be send to Mr. Auriol.

These accounts are required to be kept in rupees, and the cawns of cowries to be shown in an inner column. You will, therefore, be pleased to give direction accordingly.

These accounts are very pressingly wanted as the general statements of the last year are now drawing out. I request, therefore, you will do me the favour to hurry the despatch of these with all possible expedition.

A true Copy.

C. BURROWES,
Secretary.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) CHARLES CROFTES,
Accountant-General to the Revenue Department.

No. 114.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,
Chief of Dacca.

SYLHET :
28th December 1779.

SIR,

Troubles from
the Khasis.

For some past the people under Jointah¹ having been exceeding troublesome to the adjoining pergunnahs dependent on Sylhet by committing depredations and plundering several villages, I demanded satisfaction of the Rajah, who in answer informed me that these people had some time before revolted, and, so far from being under his countroul, had declared war against him, but at the same time requested, as the most probable means of putting a stop to these like insults in future, from the dread they entertain of the English Arms, that I would grant him a guard of a Havildar and ten sepoy. About a month ago I complied with this request nor have I since had the smallest cause of complaint whatever.

A mutinous
Havildar.

A few days ago the Rajah having represented to me that the Havildar commanding this small party had been guilty of many irregularities in beating his people, I ordered him to be relieved. On the night of his arrival at Sylhet, this Havildar of his own accord sent a sepoy in my name to call the Rajah's Vakeel, and, by this means enticing him from his home, carried him to the guard, where in his presence he caused him to be beaten and maltreated in a cruel and outrageous manner. Next morning the merchants and dependants of Jointah, to the number of 2 or 3,000, immediately deserted the province and the consequences may still be more disagreeable as they are unacquainted but what they are maltreated by my orders.

Under a guard I have now sent down to Dacca Beessunaut the said Havildar, the sepoy who stood entry and assisted in beating the Vakeel, as also the sepoy who carried him to the guard. I hope, therefore, you will order them to be delivered over to the Commanding Officer to be tried by a Court Martial for their outrageous behaviour: in the meantime I will send down witnesses and proofs to establish the crime laid to their charge.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

¹Jointia.

No. 115.

[Received 20th January 1780.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA:

4th January 1780.

SIR,

We are now to inform you that the Hon'ble Governor General and Council have been pleased to consent to the remission of the balance due from Sylhet for the year 1187, but they will not allow of any reduction of the jumma of that Province. Balances re-
mitted.
Reduction of
Jumma not
allowed.

Having addressed the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council upon the subject of the waste lands in Sylhet, in consequence of your representation of the 1st of October, we now enclose you a copy of that address together with the Hon'ble Board's rep'y; and require that you will lay before us at large your sentiments upon the subject, particularly pointing out what quantity of uncultivated land there may be in the Province not the property of individuals. Waste lands.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

WM. HOLLOND.

G. HATCH.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.,
Governor-General, and Council of Revenue,
Fort William.

DACCA:

The 21st October 1779.

HON'BLE SIR and SIRS,

Herewith we have the honour to transmit you the General Treasury Account and Jumma Wassil Baukee of the Sylhet Province for the Sylhet year 1188, together with a copy of a letter from Mr. Lindsay which accompanied them. From these you will observe that a balance of cowns of cowries 40,745-3-15 has this year fallen in the Sylhet revenue. We are persuaded that this was unavoidable, and we had every reason to expect it, as we were at the time informed not only from Mr. Lindsay himself, but also from the natives, of mischief done in Sylhet by the heavy fall of rain, which he assigns as the principal cause of this balance. We, therefore, hope that you will deem the zemindars entitled to a remission of the arrears due from them as some recompence for their losses. Lindsay not
to be blamed
for bal-
ances.

Mr. Lindsay seems to think that a trifling abatement in the jumma of the zemindars of Sylhet is absolutely necessary. As he has long resided in the Province, and has been very assiduous in attending to the business of it, we apprehend that he cannot be mistaken in this point, and a knowledge of his character gives us full assurance that he would not recommend a deduction unless he was convinced that the zemindars really require it. We therefore beg leave to join him in recommending that the sum of 25,000 cowns may be Abatement
of Revenue
recommen-
ded.

allowed to be distributed in remissions among such of the zemindars as have most occasion for them, especially as so small an amount is relieving them considerably with very little loss to the Government, which now receives a greater revenue from the Sylhet Province than ever it did formerly.

Waste land.

It appears advisable to take measures for putting the vast tracts of waste land in the Sylhet province into a state of cultivation. When any tract of land is ascertained by Mr. Lindsay to be actually in a waste state, we apprehend that there would be no impropriety in granting a sunnud for it from the khalsa to any individual who should undertake to cultivate it at a certain progressive benefit to accrue to Government, three or four of the first years being allowed to clear the land and bring it into a state fit for cultivation.

A true copy.

We are, etc.,

C. BURROWS.

[Chief, and Provincial Council, Dacca.]

No. 116.

[Received the 14th February 1780.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM :

The 10th February 1780.

SIR,

Charge of Dis-
obedience to
Orders.

It appearing by a report from the Accountant General to the Hon'ble the Governor-General and Council made in obedience to their commands of the 27th December last, notified to you, that your accounts have not yet been sent in conformably thereto, I am directed to call upon you to answer the charge of disobedience of orders, and to inform you that the Board allow you seven days for the preparation of your defence, after which time and the necessary period for the conveyance of this notice to you and your reply, they will proceed to pass judgement on your conduct.

I am,

J. P. AUBIOL,

Secy.

No. 117.

JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,

Chief, and Provincial Council of Revenue,

Dacca.

SYLHET :

4th February 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

Request for
an Assistant.

Having in compliance with your orders drawn out and transmitted to your Board duplicate Treasury Accounts with particulars of the charges from Bysack 1187 to Augun 1189, I now beg leave to request that you will grant me an allowance for a writer, as the additional accounts required of me in

future, the proceedings of the Adawlut, the current business of the Province, and above all the constant attention I am obliged to pay to the collections are duties too much for one person to fulfil without some assistance, nor will my salary of 360 rupees per month admit of my disbursing this charge at my own expense.

I have, etc.,

— — —
No. 118¹.

TO THE HON^{BLE} ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector at Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM :

9th March 1780.

SIR,

The station of first Coun [cillor] at this Presidency having become vac- Departure of
cant by the departure of Richard Barwell for Europe, we think it necessary Barwell.
to inform you that Philip Francis, Esq., the next senior member, has succeeded
thereto.

We are,

WARREN HASTINGS.

P. FRANCIS.

EDW. WHEELER.

No. 119.

[Received 19th April.]

TO THE HON^{BLE} MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 7th April 1780.

SIR,

The Hon^{ble} Governor General and Council have been pleased to approve Approval of
your Settlement and kistbundy of the Sylhet Province for the year 1189, and Settlement.
also to allow 60 rupees per month for a writer in addition to your establish- Allowance of
ment. With respect to your proposal for issuing grants for the cultivation of a writer.
the waste lands of your Province, we herewith transmit you a copy of the Waste lands.
Governor General and Council's Orders upon that subject, and request your
particular attention to them.

We are, etc.,

W. HOLLOND.

M. DAY.

G. HATCH.

¹Richard Barwell sailed from Calcutta in the *Swallow* on March 3, 1780. This letter bears three remarkably fine autograph signatures.

Extract of a letter from the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council of Revenue, dated the 28th March 1780.

Grants of waste lands. For the reasons stated by Mr. Lindsay and corroborated by your opinions, we have determined to empower the Resident at Sylhet to issue grants for the waste lands of Sylhet, but only to such proprietors of the Jummaye lands as may be willing to undertake the culture of the same, and in proportions equal to their present possessions, free of all tax or demand for the first 5 years, but afterwards liable to such revenue as the Government may then fix. The grants to be registered and issued from the Khalsah upon application from the Sylhet Resident or from your Board. Where the grantees are willing to engage for a specific rent payable after the expiration of the said period, we empower you to decide upon such offer, and the rent so agreed upon shall be declared in the sunnud to continue without increase or abatement for two lives.

Extract of a letter from the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council of Revenue, dated the 17th December 1779.

Reduction of jumma not allowed. We consent to remit the balance due from Sylhet for the Sylhet year 1188, but will not allow of any reduction in the jumma of that province.

With respect to what you recommend relative to the waste lands in Sylhet, we conceive that none of them belong to the Government, that they are all included in the grants to the zemindars, talookdars, etc. If, however, this is not the case, we authorise you to receive any proposals that may be tendered to you for the cultivation of tracts of waste lands, and, if we judge them such as Government may comply with, we direct that they may be transmitted to us.

No. 120.

[Received 1st May.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :

20th April 1780.

SIR,

Habiganj. On the 30th November last, upon a representation made by the zemindar of Turruff, that Amed Reza, zemindar of Bunniachung, had erected a haut close to his gunge, called Hubbeebgunge, as totally to destroy it, we directed that Amed Reza's haut should be discontinued, if it has been erected since the Bengal year 1178. Amed Reza has now, in consequence, delivered to us a petition, a copy of which we enclose you, setting forth that his haut called Nubby

Gunge, is at the distance of $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of a day's journey from Hubbeebgunge. If this representation be true, or if Nubbygunge is not within the sound of a large Tom Tom from Hubbeebgunge, we have come to a resolution that he shall be permitted to continue his haut, and in either of these cases we countermand our order of the 30th November last.

We are, etc.,

W. HOLLOND.

M. DAY.

G. HATCH.

*Petition of Sree Bullub, Vakeel to Amed Reza, Zemindar of pergunah
Bunniachung in the Sylhet Province.*

There is a haut in my Constituent's zemindary, upon which he has expended a considerable sum of money, and has by much pain, and trouble got it pretty well inhabited. It was formerly called Sheebpassa, but now goes by the name of Nubbygunge. The haut is at least three-fourths of a day's journey from Hubbeebgunge, belonging to the zemindar or Turruff. Notwithstanding which he has falsely represented to Mr. Lindsay that my Constituent has newly established it, and that Hubbeebgunge has been ruined by its vicinity to it. Upon this plea, he has also raised disturbances and molests the shop-keepers and other people that are passing from Nubbygunge with their goods.

I beg, therefore, that a perwanna be issued to the moodys and beoparrys of the aforesaid haut, encouraging them to continue to carry on their business in it as formerly.

A true translate.

(Signed) B. Crisp,

Deputy Persian Translator.

A true copy.

C. BURROWES,

Secretary.

No. 121.

[Received 2nd May.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

Dacca:

20th April 1780.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 2nd instant and are sorry to observe that the inhabitants of your province are disturbed by incursions of the hill people. As you represent that the Burkundasses you have taken into pay is an absolutely necessary measure to give security to the lives and property of a

Protective
Measures
against the
Hill People.

considerable number of people who are immediately under the protection of Government, we are under a necessity of acquiescing in it, being at present unable to furnish you a detachment from the Dacca Militia, on account of the number of sepoys that are out in the different pergunnahs; but we cannot but hope that you will be able to moderate the charge, as it is now very heavy, and we trust to you that you will dismiss the Burkundasses immediately as the occasion for raising them no longer exists.

We cannot think that it would be inexpedient to expel the people you represent as the invaders of the public peace from the country they inhabit, particularly as they could have no place to fly to but the hills, from whence they might make continual incursions, and thereby put Government to a greater expense to protect the inhabitants of Sylhet than the advantages arising from a deserted country could possibly re-imburse. Your object must be protection to the inhabitants of Sylhet, without the necessity of continuing an established and heavy expense to Government; and this must be affected by reducing the country, which we apprehend might be done without difficulty, and making the inhabitants good subjects to Government, or by taking a number of prisoners and releasing them upon a promise of their future good behaviour, and responsible hostages may be taken, if there are such, as a security for the due performance of this promise.

We are, etc.,

W. HOLLOND.

M. DAY.

G. HATCH.

No. 122.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 2nd May 1780.

SIR,

Company of
Sepoys under
Ensign
Troop.

We have received your letter of the 18th, and immediately despatched 40 seapoys with their black officers, under the command of Ensign Troop, also a sufficient supply of ammunition for the whole detachment. Ensign Troop has orders to comply with every requisition you may make. As it is not in our power to spare any more seapoys, we hope this supply with the addition of the European officer to command them, and the Burkundasses you have already retained, will be sufficient to preserve the peace of the district.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

W. HOLLOND.

M. DAY.

G. HATCH.

No. 123.

[Received 24th May.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 9th May 1780.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 29th ultimo, with the several accounts, bills of exchange, and invoice of treasure, mentioned to accompany it. Remittance of
Treasure re-
quested.

We observe that there is a very heavy balance in your Treasury, which we desire may be remitted to us, as soon as the weather permits or an opportunity offers of sending it by bill.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

W. HOLLOND.

M. DAX.

G. HATCH.

No. 124.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :

17th May 1780.

SIR,

We now enclose you copy of a letter from the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council. It is not the first we have received of this tenor relative to the Sylhet toujee account. We must lay the weight of the neglect where it ought to rest, upon your shoulders, and, should we be again subjected to a reproof of the kind, you must expect to ensure our highest displeasure. If there should be but a balance of 100 cawns in any one kist, an explanation is nevertheless to accompany your accounts, and that in duplicate. Neglect of
Accounts.

We also send you a copy of our reply to the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council, whereby you will see that, although we condemn the neglect complained of, we have nevertheless given you credit for maintaining the collections of the Sylhet District.

We are, etc.,

J. SHAKESPEAR.

W. HOLLOND.

Enclosure No. 1.

To JOHN SHAKESPEAR, Esq.,
Chief and Provincial Council at Dacca.

FORT WILLIAM :
The 5th May 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

Disobedience
to Orders.

On examining your towjee account for the month of Phaugin, we observe a balance stated against the district of Sylhet of rupees 7,081-4-7. We desire you will immediately furnish us with an explanation of this balance ; and hope we shall not be obliged to take notice again of your disobedience to our repeated and peremptory orders for accompanying your towjee accounts with the necessary explanations.

We are, etc.,
WARREN HASTINGS, etc.

Enclosure No. 2.

To THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.,
Governor General and Council of Revenue,
Fort William.

DACCA :
The 17th May 1780.

HON'BLE SIR AND GENTLEMEN,

Apology for
Lindsay.

We have been honoured with your commands of the 5th instant. We are extremely concerned that the omission of the Sylhet Resident should have disabled us from furnishing you with the explanation of the balance of Rs. 7,081-7-2 upon the towjee for Phaugin in due time. In Choite the balance accumulated to 64,024 cawns of cowries or rupees 11,606-0-0, and the explanation annexed at the foot of the towjee account already forwarded is : "The above balance is chiefly due from the khedah mahal zemindars, who will be enabled to discharge it when credited for the elephants caught during the season. There will then appear little or no balance outstanding."

From this, Gentlemen, you will be pleased to observe that, although the Sylhet Resident was neglectful in not assigning the cause of the apparent balance, yet he has by no means failed in the collections, the balances being in fact mainly nominal, and necessarily withheld by the zemindars to enable them to conduct the business of catching elephants for the Government.

We are, etc.,
[Chief and Council of Dacca.]

A true copy.
WM. HUNTER,
Acting Secretary.

No. 125.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :
The 9th May 1780.

SIR,

I am directed by the Chief and Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo, and to inform you that they cannot reply any further to it until they are favored with the orders of the Hon'ble Governor General and Council, in answer to a reference, which they have thought proper to make to them in consequence of your representations. The Chantallah Expedition.¹

Copy of the address to the Hon'ble Board I am also directed to transmit you herewith for your information.

I am, etc.,
C. BURROWES,
Secretary.

Enclosure.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.,
Governor General, and Council of Revenue,
Fort William.

DACCA :
The 9th May 1780.

HON'BLE SIR AND GENTLEMEN,

We beg leave to lay before you another letter from the Resident at Sylhet in addition to that transmitted to your Hon'ble Board under date the 20th ultimo.

We are entirely of opinion that the expedition proposed by Mr. Lindsay should be effected: however, we have our doubts as to the propriety of accepting the voluntary services of those who are mentioned to have offered themselves, and as there is sufficient time to admit of the reference, we are induced to request your particular orders before we issue any instructions to Mr. Lindsay. As to the proposed expense, it is very moderate, in proportion to the service which may be rendered.

We have, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEAR,
• *Dacca Council.*

A true copy.

C. BURROWES,
Secretary.

¹ "The Chantallah, or freebooters inhabiting a wide extent of country under the hills thirty miles from Sylhet, were yet even a more numerous and more troublesome people. Upon one occasion, returning from Dacca, they attacked my boat in river, and wounded several of my men with arrows; in consequence of this I sent an express to Sylhet, desiring them to send what men they could spare. Sixty accordingly came, and I entered their country during the night. Most fortunately I did not take the direct road, but a circuitous one, almost impassable; for an ambuscade had been laid during that day. I found the people infinitely stronger than I expected, and that my force was not adequate to them. Towards evening, when I was meditating a retreat out of the country, a large body of men appeared advancing in regular order on the plain. I now saw the full extent of my danger, but was determined to meet it with a good face, and boldly marched up to them. When upon the point of firing upon my supposed enemy, I had the satisfaction of seeing a white flag displayed demanding a parley. The chief came forward, and told me they were friends, and ready to assist us in our undertaking,—that he had seen us from the distant hills, and had come to our support. Being thus re-inforced, the state of affairs became totally altered. I took up a convenient position in the country for some days, and remained until they gave me ample security for their behaviour in future. This operated as a serious lesson for me to be more prudent, for at no period of my life was I in such danger as on that occasion." *Lives of the Lindsays*, Volume III, pages 186-7.

No. 126.

[Received 14th June.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

Council Chamber,
The 29th May 1780.

SIR,

Accounts.

The Accomptant-General having reported to the Board. that he has not received your accounts for Choite 1189, I am directed by the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council to call upon you for your reasons for not having complied with their Orders of the 27th December 1779 and 10th February last.

I am, etc.,
W. BRUERE,
Assistant Secretary.

No. 127.

[Received 14th July.]

Dacca:

The 27th June 1780.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

SIR,

Chuntallah
Expedition.

We have received your letter of the 14th instant, and much approve your conduct and management in quieting the disturbances without bloodshed.

Pandnah
tannah.

As we are not of the opinion that a tannah stationed in the manner you propose can have the effect of preventing incursions, we cannot assent to any establishment for that purpose: however, we have no objection to your expending the additional tribute, which is to be hereafter paid by the hill people on this service, or to your placing guards of sepoy at such stations as you may think necessary.

We are, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEAR.
W. HOLLOND.
M. DAY.

No. 128.

[Received 20th July.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

Dacca:

The 8th July 1780.

SIR,

Approval of
Expedition.

The Hon'ble Governor General and Council, in consequence of our representations have approved of the steps taken by you, as mentioned in your

letter of the 2nd April last, and confirmed our instructions upon the subject of the 20th of that month. Having also laid before them your letter of the 20th April, they are pleased to authorise the expedition you proposed to and allow of your accepting the offers of the Sylhet inhabitants to assist you. (1)

We are, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEAR.
W. HOLLOND.
M. DAY.

No. 129.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :
The 26th July 1780.

SIR,

In your Treasury Accounts for Jait we observe a charge of 6,976 A. Rs. Elephant as paid to the Elephant Contractor's Agent. We are ignorant of any authority contract. that you have for making such payment, and, as you have neither sent us a voucher, or bill for the sum, we cannot allow the debit, and direct that you recredit the amount in your next months accounts ; and we have further to desire that you do not make any more payments to the Nabob's Agent until you shall receive our orders for the purpose.

We are, etc.,
J. SHAKESPEAR.
W. HOLLOND.
M. DAY.

On the docket " respecting Mr. Templer's bill".

No. 130.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :
The 14th September 1780.

SIR,

We have duly received your letter of the 10th instant and herewith trans- Segah and mit you a copy of our proceedings to regulate your conduct in all cases where Mujroy lands.

1 "Our military strength did not in general exceed one hundred effective men, being a detachment of brigade sipoys, commanded by an officer; the men were chiefly natives of the higher provinces, but the climate of the hills, and particularly the water, was so pernicious to their health that whole detachments were successively destroyed; the party was in consequence withdrawn. Owing to this contrary circumstance, I proposed to the Board to undertake the defence of the province myself; at an expense far inferior to the former; with native troops formed into a militia corps. This was readily agreed to, the command remained with me, and this arrangement continued during my residence in the country. My corps I increased or reduced as occasion required. I accompanied them myself in every service of difficulty, and my business, of course, was well done." *Lives of the Lindsays. Volume III, pages 180-1.*

the present occupants of the Segah and Mujroy lands fall in balance and abscond.

We are, etc.,
W. HOLLAND.
M. DAY.
DAY.-BURGES.

— — — — —
[Enclosure.]

Extract from the proceedings of the Dacca Provincial Council, dated the 14th September 1780.

READ the following letter from the Resident at Sylhet.

Enter it.

The Board esteem all the lands on the Segah and Mujroy establishment to have belonged originally to the Zemindars, but that they were in an uncultivated state at the time the grants were made to the present occupants. These have held possession a considerable length of time and have been at the expense and care of cultivation. They should therefore be supported so long as they continue to pay up their revenues regularly, but in the event of their falling in arrears, or absconding, the Board are of opinion that the property of these lands reverts properly to the Zemindars upon their making good the balance that may be due at the time of obtaining possession.

RESOLVED, therefore, that in such case where the present occupants of the Segah and Mujroy lands fall in arrears and abscond, that Mr. Lindsay be authorized to issue a publication for their appearance in one month upon pain of forfeiting their lands, and that in default thereof he invest the property of the lands so forfeited in the Zemindar of the pergunnah in which they may be included upon his making good the balance due at the time of his obtaining possession, which, if he should refuse, they must be put up to public auction and sold to the best bidder. Agreed that a copy of these proceedings be transmitted to Mr. Lindsay with the following letter.

A true extract.
C. BURROWS,
Secretary.

No. 134.

[Received 12th April].

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
Resident at Sylhet.

DACCA :
The 29th March 1781.

SIR,

I herewith transmit you the copy of an Establishment for the Sylhet Province, fixed by the Committee of Revenue which is to take place from
Sylhet Estab-
lishment.

the first of Bysagh next, and I, therefore, request that you will draw out your account of Bysagh agreeably to this establishment.

When you were last at Dacca, I understood that you would return ^{Sepoys.} thirty of the sepoy's that were sent to you about a twelve-months ago, and you informed me that you had given the necessary orders upon the sub(ject.) They are not, however, yet arrived, and as the Commander at this place represents to me that his corps is so deficient at Dacca that he cannot afford to detach any more men upon duty, I request you will order this number back to their Station.

I am, etc.,
W. HOLLOND.

No. 135.

[Received 20th April.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY.

DACCA:

The 3rd April 1781.

SIR,

By the direction of the Committee, I beg leave to inform you that they ^{Accounts.} have thought proper to continue you for the present at Sylhet to act under my immediate authority.

I have not yet received your accounts for Phaugun. The Committee have certainly cause to complain of so great a delay. I observe [that your] accounts for the Bengal month and your running Treasury Accounts for the English month arrive at the same time. I apprehend that you might transmit the former by a previous despatch.

I am, etc.,
W. HOLLOND.

No. 136.

[Received 26th April]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY.

DACCA:

The 12th April 1781.

SIR,

The Committee of Revenue have again directed me to write to you to be ^{Accounts.} more regular in transmitting your accounts, observing that they constantly arrive several days after the Towjee accounts are received from the other places. I must, therefore, request that you will despatch your accounts for the Bengal month in such time as they may arrive here by the 15th of the succeeding Bengal month.

I am, etc.,
W. HOLLOND.

No. 137.

[Received 26th April.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY.

DACCA :

The 17th April 1781.

SIR,

Accounts.

I have received your letter of the 11th instant and cannot admit of the justness of your pleas for not transmitting your accounts in better time. The General Order upon this subject is that accounts of the preceding be closed and despatched by the 5th of the succeeding month. An hircarrah may with ease arrive here from Sylhet, either by land or water, in five days. Granting, therefore, some delay in the despatch of your accounts, you might certainly regulate it in such manner as for them to reach me by the 18th of the Bengal month, which I apprehend would be sufficient time ; but they now seldom arrive before the twenty-third or twenty-fourth.

I am, etc.,

W. HOLLOND.

No. 138.

[Received 16th May.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 10th May 1781.

SIR,

Arrears
Revenue.

The Committee have desired me to write to you that they shall depend upon you exerting your utmost endeavours to recover the balances of the Revenue of the Sylhet Provinces as expeditiously as possible.

I am, etc.,

WM. HOLLOND.

No. 139.¹

[Received 1st June.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY.

DACCA :

The 24th May 1781.

SIR,

Revenue
Settlement.

I herewith transmit you a copy of the proceedings of the Committee of Revenue relative to the Sylhet settlement.

I am, etc.,

W. HOLLOND.

¹ In binding up this letter the sheet has been cut down, and the last syllables of several lines have been sacrificed.

Extract of the Proceedings of the Committee of Revenue of the 23rd and 28th April 1781.

Read the following report of the Dewan respecting [the] Settlement of Sylhet :—

In the Chuckla of Sylhet there are many talookdars. Such of them as are present agree to an increase of Rs. 25,000, and a nazuranna of Rs. 15,000. A settlement for five years may be made with a Wadadar, and this mode should be approved, and publication thereof made, if a responsible person may be found who will engage.

<i>G—ishta</i>	...	...	...	200,025	5
<i>Ezaffa</i>	...	...	...	25,000	0
				225,025	5
<i>Nuzuranna</i>				15,000	0
				<hr/>	
				240,025	5

The vakeels of the zemindars being called before the Committee, **RESOLVED** that the settlement of Sylhet be made for —years only the zemindars who are to pay their revenue through a Wadadar, that instead of a nuzuranna of 15,000 rupces a proportionable increase be made on the Jamma; and, therefore, that, in future the jamma be rated at 2,35,025-5, being an increase of Rs. 35,000 upon—year's revenue, and lastly that this increase be distributed amongst the different zemindars in proportion of the assua jamma which the Dewan says can be fully ascertained by the Canangoes' registers. The vakeels of the zemindars, being informed of these Resolutions, declare acquiescence.

Agreed a Wadadar be accordingly appointed to Sylhet at our next meeting.

The 28th April 1781. The Committee taking into consideration the appointment of a Mutahed¹ to Sylhet.

AGREED that Cheyt Singh be appointed to this charge, and that the Dewan be directed to receive from him written engagements agreeable to the plan laid down in the Minutes of Consultation of the 23rd instant by which he may be bound for the due discharge of the Revenue.

ORDERED also that Joynarain be deputed by the Committee to attend the Wadadar to keep a check account of the Jumma Wasil Bake.

ORDERED also that the necessary aumilnammas or instructions be drawn out for the Wadadar and Joynarain.

ORDERED also that the Wadadar be directed to receive the caboolcats of the zemindars, agreeable to a form to be hereafter delivered to him, and transmit them to the Committee for their approbation, when aumilnammas will be returned to him under the signature of the Governor General in Council.

Revenue Committee.

A true extract.

THOMAS DOUGLAS,

Sub-Secretary.

i.e., a Mutahid, = a contractor.

No. 140.

To THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA :

The 3rd June 1781.

SIR,

Settlement.

The Committee have been pleased to direct that the new Settlement for Sylhet shall not take place till the expiration of the present Sylhet year. Agreeably to their orders, I herewith transmit you a purwannah to the Sylhet zemindars, declaring that you are authorised to sell any portion of land necessary to make good to Government all arrears of revenue that may be due from them. The Committee have further directed me to enjoin you to exert your utmost endeavours to realise the revenues of the pre-sent year.

I am, etc.,
W. HOLLOND.

No. 141.

[Received 11th June 1781.]

DACCA :

The 3rd June 1781.

Bundabust of Sylhet 1190.

Farmer Gyaran Mitter, Security.

Serianat Beanoy.

Jumma of 1190	2,00,025	5	0
Increase	35,000	0	0

Total Jumma of 1190	...	2,35,025	5	0
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Kistbundee of Sylhet, 1190.

Assin.	Khartick.	Augun.	Poos.	
795 3	795 3	19,258 13 5	19,258 13 5	
Maug	Phagun.	Chait.	Bysack.	
21,313 13 5	21,313 13 5	25,319 5 5	25,319 5 5	
Jaistha.	Asarh.	Sravon.	Bhadra.	Total.
25,319 5 5	25,319 5 0	25,319 5 5	25,697 1 5	2,35,025 5 0

No. 142.

[Received 14th June.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

Dacca :

The 8th June 1781.

SIR,

I herewith enclose you a purwanah from the Committee to the Chowdries of Sylhet proclaiming to them that their lands will be sold at public auction to make good to Government any amount of Revenue that they may fall in balance.

I am, etc.,

W. HOLLOND.

• The ink of this document is faded.

No. 143.

TO WILLIAM HOLLOND, Esq.,

Chief of Dacca.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA

2nd July 1781.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the — *ultimo*, accompanying the accounts of the Sylhet province for the month of Jeyto. Accounts.

As these accounts arrived considerably beyond the time limited, we think it necessary to inform you that, by the order of the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council of Revenue, we must regularly report to them every instance in which our directions for transmitting of accounts are neglected, and we must repeat to you our positive instructions to forward them in time that they may arrive at the Presidency by the 25th of the English month.

With respect to the balances, we desire you will direct Mr. Lindsay to exert his utmost endeavours to realise the current Revenue before the expiration of the present year.

I am, etc.,

J. SHORE.

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

C. CROFTES.

No. 144.

[Received 20th August.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,

at Sylhet.

DACCA :

5th August 1781.

SIR,

Elephants.

In your account for the last *Aughun*, you charge an advance of Rupces 2,740-1-15 to the Nabob's Elephant Daroga, which I request you will recredit, as you are particularly prohibited from making any advances to the Daroga without taking a bill of exchange from him upon the Nabob, and I have not yet received any bill for this sum. If however, you should have transmitted one, it is lost, and therefore, I request you will in this case send me a duplicate.

I am, etc.,

W. HOLLOND.

No. 145.

[Received 2nd December].

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,

at Sylhet.

DACCA :

20th August 1781.

SIR,

Two years
Settlement
1191, 1192.

I herewith send you a copy of the Settlement and Kistbundee of the Sylhet province for the years 1191 and 1192 formed by the Committee of Revenue at Calcutta.

You will be pleased to establish the farmer in full possession of his farm at the commencement of the year 1191, from which period he is to pay his kist to you at the rate of 4 cawns per sicca rupee.

The Committee have authorised me to direct you to make a publication throughout the Sylhet district requiring such zemindars as are absent to attend you on a fixed day to answer for their revenues and balances, and declaring that, in case of disobedience, the lands shall be sold, which declaration you will carry into execution, upon the disobedience of the zemindars.

I am, etc.,

W. HOLLOND.

No. 146.

[Received 2nd September.]

TO THE HONBLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA :

23rd August 1781.

SIR,

The Committee has been pleased to extend the period for the arrival of your accounts at Calcutta to the 30th of the month, instead of the 25th. I therefore request you will despatch them from Sylhet in time for them to reach Calcutta by the 30th. Accounts.

I am, etc.,
W. HOLLOND.

No. 147.

[Received 23rd September].

TO MR. WILLIAM HOLLOND,
Chief at Dacca.

COMMITTEE OF REVENUE
27th August 1781.

SIR,

In auditing the Treasury and Accounts of Sylhet for the month of Chawkidars. Bysack we observe a charge for the dawk of cawns 130-9-10. As the sum allowed on this account is only cawns 120, we desire that the difference may be refunded and brought to account, as well as the charge of 8 rupees inserted as paid to chowkeydars to patrol the Town and guard the Treasury, which is not included in the fixed establishment for that district.

We likewise desire that you will call upon the Collector for an explanation of the charge of 1,449—8 rupees inserted on account the expense of sending 1,00,000 cawns of cowries to Dacca, as it appears to us to be very considerable.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE.
SAMUEL CHARTERS.
C. CROFTES.

No. 148.

[Received 1st September.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY.

DACCA :

5th September 1781

SIR

Military;

I have received your letter of the 29th, and have transmitted a copy of it to the Committee. I am very ill able from the force now at Dacca to furnish you with a re-enforcement from hence : but, at my requisition, the Commanding Officer has ordered a party of 20 sepoye, with the proper officers to

join you from the Alephsing station, and has sent you a supply of ammunition]. With these helps, added to the Burkundosses you have raised, I should hope that you will be able to retaliate upon the invaders the depredations they have committed in the Sylhet province, in a manner that shall effectually prevent repetition of them : to which end I think it would be advisable to take some of the principals prisoners, and detain them as hostages for the good behaviour of their countrymen.

I am, etc.,
W. HOLLOND.

No. 149.

[Received 12th October.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM :
1st October 1781.

SIR,

Sir J. McPherson.

The Hon'ble the Court of Directors having thought fit to nominate and appoint John McPherson, Esq., to the vacancy in this Council caused by the resignation of Richard Barwell, Esq., and His Majesty, having been pleased to approve of the same nomination, conformably to the provision made by act of Parliament in that behalf, we are to inform you that Mr. McPherson is arrived at this Presidency, and has taken his seat at the Board.

We are, etc.,
E. WHEELER.
JOHN MCPHERSON.

No. 150.

[Received 26th October.]

TO MR. WILLIAM HOLLAND,
Chief of Dacca. COMMITTEE OF REVENUE, CALCUTTA

5th October 1781.

SIR,

Lindsay
exempted
score
balances
Revenue.

We have received your letter of the 29th ultimo, enclosing the general accounts of Sylhet for the year 1190, together with copy of Mr. Lindsay's letter to you on the subject of the balances. We are fully satisfied that Mr. Lindsay has exerted every endeavour to realize the revenue of Sylhet, and we have only to recommend his continuing to use every means to reduce the amount of the balances as much as possible, and we desire that Mr. Lindsay will point out such of the zemindars [who] may have wilfully withheld payment of their revenues in distinction to those who may have suffered

from the depredations of the hill people. The former can have no claim to any indulgence, and, therefore, we desire that Mr. Lindsay to take every method to recover the outstanding balances.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

C. CROFTES.

No. 151.

[Received 27th November.]

TO MR. WILLIAM HOLLAND,

Chief of Dacca.

COMMITTEE OF REVENUE, CALCUTTA :

12th November 1781.

SIR,

Enclosed we send you copies of the 3rd, 5th 13th and 14th articles of a ^{Farm of} petition presented to us by Gyaram Mitra, farmer of Sylhet. We desire you ^{Sylhet.} will direct Mr. Lindsay to give the farmer every assistance to enable him to fulfill his engagements, also to supply him with sepoy's for the guard of his Treasure and for other occasional services, on the expediency of which Mr. Lindsay will determine.

On the 13th and 14th articles we desire to have Mr. Lindsay's opinion, with such information on the subject as he can furnish us.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

C. CROFTES.

No. 152.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

DACCA :

21st November 1781.

SIR,

Herewith you will receive copy of a letter from the Committee of Revenue and of a petition presented to them by the Sylhet farmer. I request you will pay due attention to the directions contained in the former, and that you will transmit me your opinion, upon the 13th and 14th articles of the farmer's petition.

I am, etc.,

W. HOLLOND.

Extract of a Petition from Gyaram Miter.

Third.—That you will give Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Day orders to render me assistance in levying the increase and in collecting the Mosstjary and Malzamini revenues.

There are a few sepoy already stationed in Sylhet, but not sufficient to protect the lands which are situated on the borders, and to escort the treasure. I, therefore, request you will give me a letter to the Commanding Officer to afford me a party of sepoy to guard my treasure, to be under my immediate orders, and from time to time render me what further assistance I may require from him.

Thirteenth.—Anundan Coar, Lucknahjeet and Sungmanick Rajah of Purwah were formerly united. Anundan Coar came and represented to me that if the sannad for the zemindares of Lucknahjeet was made out in his name and 20 sepoy allowed him, he would pay 15,000 Rs. malgoozary towards the increase. It has long been the custom for the inhabitants of the country to refuse to serve under the said Lucknah, I therefore request that you will send orders to the Collector of Sylhet to issue a sannad forbidding the inhabitants to serve under him, and also a letter to the Commanding Officer to assist the said Anundan Coar.

Fourteenth.—As the zemindars and talookdars will be continually laying their complaints and disputes respecting their lands and talooks before me, I request you will grant me your permission to hear and determine them, and pass their decrees under my particular signature and the testimonies of the canongoes.

No. 153.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

Dacca :

13th December 1781.

SIR,

I request you will call upon the farmer of Sylhet for the balance of revenue due by him at the end of Assin, and that you will regularly demand of him payment of the Kists as they become due.

I am, etc.,
W. HOLLOND.

No. 154.

[Received the 5th January.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA :

The 3rd January 1782.

SIR,

The Farmer
dismissed.

We are much concerned to find from the Towjee account of your collections for Aughun that the balances already nearly equal to the amount of the kist for that month.

As we have reason to suppose, both from this circumstance and from others, that the farmer has engaged in an undertaking which he finds himself incapable of managing, we do not think it advisable to run the risk of a loss in the revenue by continuing the management of it in his hands. We, therefore, direct that you dispossess the farmer and his amla of all charge in the collections and take them immediately under your own care, that you call upon him for an account of his collections to the present time, and make him answerable for whatever amount he appears to have collected.

In order to prevent unnecessary trouble and delay, we direct that in future you correspond immediately with our Board and send us your monthly accounts, that you remit the produce of the revenues in couries to Dacca and dispose of them, sending us exact and regular accounts of the sales, and remitting the produce to Calcutta, either in good bills of exchange or specie.

Sylhet Collector to correspond directly with the Board.

As we mean to give you the fullest authority to act upon the present occasion, we have a perfect reliance that the inconveniences we mean to obviate by this measure will be removed, and the advantages we expect from it ensured.

Exd,

W. M.

Asst. Secy.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

C. CROFTES.

No. 155.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,

Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

The 21st January 1782.

SIR,

As the balance of the district of Sylhet is very considerable, we desire you will particularly exert yourself in realizing it as soon as possible, agreeable to the directions you have already received from us upon this subject.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

C. CROFTES.

No. 156.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :
The 28th January 1782.

SIR,
ap-
Oct-
inde-
dent of

Enclosed we send you an extract of the orders of the Board to us of this date.

EDD. W. H.
Assistant Secretary.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORN.
C. CROFTES.

Extract of a letter from the Hon'ble Board under date the 22nd January 1782.

Paragraph 4, "approve of your having placed the management of the collections of Sylhet immediately under the charge of Mr. Lindsay and authorize the addition proposed to his establishment. We also consent to his drawing the same salary and allowance granted to other collectors".

No. 157.

[Received 24th March.]

*Nil.**Nil.*

SIR,

Military.

In consequence of some resolutions of the Board respecting the Militia Sepoys, we shall be able to provide you an establishment instead of the sepoy you now have from Dacca. It must be of bukundassies. I shall, therefore, be glad if you will send me a proposed establishment as soon as you can.

I am, etc.,
J. SHORN.

No. 158.

[Received 12th April.]

TO THE HONORABLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector at Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :
The 25th March 1782.

SIR,

The Honorable Board having thought proper to direct that all sepoy detached from the several Militia Corps be withdrawn ; we direct that you form

an establishment of burgundossies for your station to supply the place of the sepoy's at present with you, and that you transmit the same to us for our approval.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE.
C. CROFTES.

EDW. W. H.
Assistant Secretary.

No. 159.

[Received 29th May.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :
The 8th April 1782.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 25th March, and approve the establishment for the defence of your district, which we direct you to complete as soon as possible. Establishment.

We also approve your proposal for erecting two mud forts, and authorise you to build them, on condition that the expence of both does not exceed 2,000 rupees.

We desire you will inform us as soon as your establishment is completed.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE.
SAMUEL CHARTERS.
C. CROFTES.

No. 160.

[Received 4th May.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM,
Accountant General's office :
The 23rd April 1 2.

SIR,

As it is indispensably requisite that the General Abstract Account of the monthly receipts and disbursements of this Government should correspond with the general books of the Presidency, and as the entries made in the former are taken from your monthly Running Treasury Accounts, and those in the latter from the general books of the Revenue Department, which are formed from your monthly Treasury Accounts for the Bengal months, I am

therefore to request that before you transmit your monthly Treasury Account for the month of Bysack to the Accountant General of the Revenue Department you will compare the same with your monthly Running Treasury Account for April 1782 which will have been transmitted to this office, and form it so, that the amount stated to be in your Treasury on that day of the month of Bysack which corresponds with the 30th of April may correspond with the amount stated by your monthly running Treasury Account for the month of April 1782 to be in your Treasury at the end of that month, without which the general books cannot possibly agree with the general abstract account of the monthly receipts and disbursements of the Government, a circumstance that would render them both undeserving of any degree of confidence, for, as one of the two must be erroneous, those who cannot discover which of the two is just would not be inclined to place the least confidence in either, and as such circumstances would hardly escape the observation of the Auditor of Indian accounts in England, he would severely censure them were they to exist.

I, therefore, think it incumbent upon me to request your attention to this point, and the more so, as it will confirm the necessity of your observing that distinction between your receipts and disbursements for that part of the month of Bysack, which corresponds with the last part of the month of April, and those for the latter part of the month of Bysack, which corresponds with the first part of the month of May (the former of which as the general books of the Revenue Department and those of the Presidency are to be annually adjusted on the 30th April will have place in the books of one year while the latter will be entered in those of the succeeding year), which was particularly enjoined by the orders of the Hon'ble Board of Revenue of the 30th January 1782.

I should hope that as I have stated the application made of your monthly Running Treasury Accounts, it would remove all doubts as to the necessity of transmitting them to this office which continues as urgent as ever.

I am, etc.,
WM. LARKINS,
Accountant General.

No. 161.¹

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members
of the Committee of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET :
22nd May 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

Cowries.

It is necessary for me to inform you that the price of cowries at Dacca of late years used to fluctuate from four cawns, four puns to four cawns six puns per Arcot rupee. The cash despatched from Sylhet being exposed to public sale, they would not settle more than four cawns six and seven puns at three months credit. This being the case, I thought it my duty to put a stop to the sale till such times as I receive your orders upon the subject; I now beg leave to know whether I shall admit of this being sold upon these terms or keep them upon hand till the market rises, of which I see little or no prospect at present.

¹This letter commences a new volume of the correspondence which has been seriously damaged by insects.

The reason assigned for the low price of cowries at Dacca is the smallness of the investment, the weavers being unable to purchase the [quan]tity of cowries they did [form]erly, there was like[wise] a large importation of cowries at Chittagong from the Maldives which being sold at a low rate greatly contributes to lower the market all over this part of the country.

I have, etc,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 162.

TO WILLIAM LARKINS, ESQ.,

Accountant-General, Fort William.

SYLHET :

22nd May 1782.

DEAR LARKINS,

I am sorry to inform you that there is a palpable mistake in my Accounts. Running Treasury Account for April last. In that account I have given credit for 17,000 cawns of cowries less than I ought to have done, [in] order to make balance in my Treasury agree with that day of Bysack which corresponds with the 30th April. I therefore now send you a copy of the above account rectified. The monthly account for Bysack will follow in two days.

I am, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 163.

TO JOHN SHORE, ESQ.,

Acting President, and Members of the

Committee of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET :

30th May 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

Agreeable to the Orders contained in your letter of the 3rd January, I ^{Farmer of} called [upon the] Sylhet Farmer to render me an account of his collections ^{Sylhet.} [during the] months he has charge of the Revenues, *vis.*, from the commencement of 1191, to the end of.....

From the wassaulut and jumma crutch papers delivered me by the Farmer, the original of which I now have the honour to enclose you, it appears that his collections amount to cawns 89,162-9-14-1: 76,929 of which he paid into the Treasury, the balance of 12,233, accordingly to his own statement, he is now indebted to the Honourable Company, but from the separate was saulut

received from the pergunnah, his collections appear to have amounted to cawns 96,135 [?]-17-8 there is, therefore, a balance in his hands of cawns 19,206-3-2-9, which is only 6,972 more than he acknowledges. My endeavours to recover the foregoing sum at Sylhet having proved totally ineffectual, I gave him permission to return to Calcutta, where I hope he will discharge the balance when called upon.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 164.

[Received 10th June.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :
The 30th May 1782.

SIR,

Photadari
Accounts.

Having on the 2nd instant directed you not to discharge any vouchers for the pay of the Fougedary Department [without our further orders, we now think it necessary to inform you that the pay of all the native officers of the Fougedary Adawluts will be defrayed by the Naib Najim himself, and that no further disbursements on this account are to appear in your monthly accounts.

These orders are not meant to extend to the receipts of the Judges of the Dewanny Adawlut, on account their Fougedary charges, which are to be defrayed by you as usual. We direct also that you require duplicate receipts of the gentlemen acting as Fougedars, one of which you will transmit to us with your accounts of monthly disbursements.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE.
SAMUEL CHARTERS.

No. 166.

[Received 30th June.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :
The 17th June 1782.

SIR,

Zemindars not
to alienate
lands.

We direct your attention to the accompanying Order of the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE.
C. CROFTES.
J. EVELYN.

*Extract of a letter from the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council,
dated the 31st May 1782.*

As it is an original and immemorial law of the constitution of these Provinces that no zemindar or other landholder paying Revenue to Government shall be permitted to alienate his lands without the express authority of Government, and as this law has been confirmed and enforced by repeated publications on the part of the Governor General and Council, we approve of the steps taken by you in the instance before us, and strictly enjoin you to prevent every attempt to defeat it under whatever authority by expelling the persons who shall attempt to usurp the possession, and proceeding against them as disturbers of the peace in every case of opposition, and either placing the lands in the possession and charge of the original proprietors, or appointing Aumils or other officers on the part of Government, to take charge of the lands on the behalf of the Company and of the Proprietor.

A true copy,
W. HAVERKAM,
Secretary.

No. 167.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the
Committee of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET:

June 28th 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

Herewith I have the pleasure to transmit you account settlement of the Sylhet District for the year 1191. The great difficulty I found in bringing the zemindars from the mofussil to execute their new engagements is the only apology I can make for my not furnishing you with this account sooner. Revenue
Difficulties.

[I am] extremely sorry to inform you that, although the [ren]ts have hitherto been paid up pretty regularly, the [amount] has by no means been collecting in the mofussil but borrowed from the money lenders, who are clamorous to be repaid, and, notwithstanding the crop has proved favourable, it is with pain I acquaint you during the five years I have resided at Sylhet I have found so much difficulty in conducting my business as at present. This is chiefly owing to the disputes subsisting between the numerous zemindars and landholders of different denominations in each pergunnah respecting the mode of collecting the from their ryots, many of them insisting upon a general measurement of their lands, whilst other proposed other methods. Differences of this nature, I flatter myself, will be adjusted [in] a short time, but what gives me far more trouble is the Adawalut of turoff, both Dewani and Phouzday. I have hitherto declined mentioning this as a grievance, but I now do it, as it must, in the course of the ensuing months, be assigned as the immediate cause of heavy balances arising in many of the pergunnahs under my jurisdiction. Sylhet, from time immemorial, has been indulged with an independent court of

justice, which took immediate cognizance of all causes or disputes arising within the limits of the district. The zemindars and ryots for the most frivolous complaints, which were formerly adjusted in the course of a few minutes, are now liable to be carried away 60 miles from their native homes. Whether they are detained there or not, it is assigned as an unvariable reason for withholding their rents. That the inhabitants of Sylhet are the most litigious set of people in Bengal is too well known to require mentioning.

In every family continual dissilation exist respecting the hereditary property of their ancestors, the boundaries of which have perhaps never been ascertained, nor can disputes of this nature be adjusted by any person but the Collector, [from] having the records of the Dewanny Duffer in his possession. Thus the lands in litigation run to jungle the property having, the Resident in the meantime is at a loss to determine what party to apply for the rents, and the whole remains in a state of confusion. The Judge of the Dewanny Adaulut cannot be supposed to have leisure to decide upon a multiplicity of complaints. I have, therefore, sometime taken the trouble of investigating the case myself, but, as it is impossible to satisfy both parties, my authority being ultimately disputed, I have declined giving myself unnecessary trouble upon the occasion. For the first three years I resided at Sylhet, by an unremitted attention to my duty, the decision of 2,500 cases appear upon record; the whole amount of which perhaps do not exceed the like number of rupees, but chiefly regarded the boundaries and property of litigation lands. So far from finding my trouble lessened, as I expected, it accumulated daily. I was, therefore, by no means sorry to see the judicial authority transferred to another person; and, was it not the welfare for the province and interest of my Hon'ble Employers is immediately concerned, it would give me much uneasiness to be vested with it.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 168.

SYLHET :

25th June 1782.

Explanation of the Toujee of Jyle 1191.

Agreeable to the Toujee Account herewith transmitted the balance outstanding amounts to cawns 58,000, which is a very little larger than it has been for several years past at the same period. If it is considered that five months of the current year were elapsed, before I took charge of the Collections, the balance I hope will not appear unreasonable.

From the foregoing sum of 58,000 cawns, which appear as a balance, must be deducted 19,000 cawns collected by the Farmer more than he paid into the Treasury. Of this circumstance I acquainted the Gentlemen of Committee in my letter of the 30th of May. The only reason assigned by the zemindars for withholding the remainder of the above balance is the very low price grain now bears throughout the district; rice being offered for

sale at the different markets at 3 maunds and half per rupee, and few or no purchasers even upon these terms. Produce of the lands, therefore, remains unsold, which prevents the ryots from paying up their arrears of revenue.

No. 168.

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM :
The 26th June 1782.

SIR,

In consequence of the late Regulations that have taken place for the better adjustment of the Revenue Books with those of the General Department which have been approved of by the Hon'ble Board, I am to request you will be pleased in future to make your Treasury Account and Account Charges conformable to the English months which must commence from the 1st May last, and to enable me to adjust your accounts of the last year which are to be brought up to the 30th April instead of being closed at the end of Baudun as heretofore, you will be pleased to transmit me as soon as you possibly can a Treasury Account and Account Charges for 20 days, *viz.*, from the end of Choite or 10th April to the 30th April, in which you will please to bring to Account the Receipts and Disbursements which have actually occurred during that period, agreeable to the accompanying form, that the balance of that account may correspond with the balance of your Running Treasury Account for April 1782 which you have already transmitted to the Accountant-General. I am also to request you will be pleased to make out a General Treasury Account and Jumma Wassil Bakey with the receipts stated in each conformable to the amount of the 7 months accounts, *viz.*, from the beginning of Baudun to the 30th April.

I am, etc.,
CHARLES CROFTES,
Accountant General, Revenue Department.

No. 169.

[Received 28th June.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :
The 30th May 1782.

SIR,

On the 4th of April last we directed you to collect the amount due from the districts, under your charge, account the fees of the Secretary of the

Revenue Department, and remit it to us either by bills or in specie. As you have not complied with this order, we direct your immediate attention thereto and that you remit the same without further delay.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

No. 170.

CHARLES CROFTES, Esq.,

Accomptant-General to the Revenue
Department, Fort William.

SYLHET:

July 1782.

SIR,

In compliance with the directions contained in your letter of the 26th ultimo, I have now the pleasure to enclose you Treasury account for 20 days, viz.

From the end of Choitor 10th April to the 30th April 1782.

Charges collections, charges zemindary and charges general for the above period.

General Treasury account and Jumma Wassil Baukee, from the commencement of Assin to the 20th Bysack or 30th April.

Collections.

Had the Jumma Wassil Baukee been closed at the end of Choit, instead of the present period, the balance would only have amounted to cawns 27,720. In the above Jumma Wassil Baukee account the toujee is carried on to the 20th Bysack. The revenues in demand for these 20 days amount to cawns 59,903-4-0, but as there are never any collections made at Sylhet till the latter end of the current month, or the beginning of the ensuing, on account of the great delays attended the transportation of cowries from the mofussil, it must account for the kist of 20 days appearing uncollected. The balance outstanding will be brought to credit in the accounts of new year.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 171.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members
of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET:

18th July 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

Lakhira
lands.

I was duly favoured with your letter of the 17th ultimo, directing me to transmit you an account of all the lands in the Sylhet district, under the

denomination Lackorage,¹ or rent free lands. In reply, I take the liberty of acquainting you that, from the records deposited either in the canangoes or dewanny dufter, I have been able to obtain no satisfactory information whatever, so as to enable me to comply with the orders. The soil of the Sylhet district, during the Mogul administration was never considered as an object worthy the attention of Government. In lieu of revenue, the officers stationed here on the part of the Nabob, engaged to furnish him a certain number of elephants and a stipulatedof chunam. The cultivated lands, which constituted but a **very** small proportion, were only considered the property of the zemindars from the title of prescription. As to the waste and jungle lands, they were in the most profuse manner bestowed in charity or given upon a kharidge jumma[by]the Phozedar to his priest and menial servants, nor was any register kept of such gifts. In consequence of this liberality, there is not a person, even of the most inferior rank, in Sylhet, who is not possessed of Lackorage land of some denomination or other, and the best richest lands in the province are exempt from the revenues.

In hopes of obviating the above difficulties, I have called upon the zemindars to deliver me a list of these lands situated in their respective pergunnahs. After drawing it up in the form prescribed, I will take the liberty of transmitting it to you. For the present permit me to offer my opinion that until a general measurement of the whole province takes place it will be impossible to determine the quantity, etc., of the lackorage and rent free lands with any degree of certainty.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 172.

[Received 30th July].

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet :

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

The 18th July 1782.

SIR,

Enclosed you will receive a copy of the orders of the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council, to which we direct your strictest attention.

We are, etc.,
SAMUEL CHARTERS.
C. CROFTES.

Minute of Council the 11th July 1782.

The Board deeming it necessary to prevent travellers in passing through the country from the pernicious practice of seizing and pressing the inhabitants to serve as coolies or otherwise, do hereby given notice that if any single sepoys or small detachment of sepoys commanded by European or Native

Impressment
of Coolies.

¹ Lakhiraj (corruptly lackorage) = exempted from revenue.

officers, going from place to place, shall be guilty of any oppression to the inhabitants of the country or shall attempt to make them serve as coolies the Collector of the District is authorized and directed to apprehend the offenders, and deliver them over for trial to the nearest Military Station. When the public service is concerned, and coolies or carriage of any sort are required, application is to be made to the Fouzdar or Zemindar of the district or village who is to furnish such assistance as may be necessary. The Collectors are likewise directed to arrest any native servant; not being sepoys who shall be found so transgressing and deliver them over to justice.

A true copy,

J. P. AUBIOL.

No. 173.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members

of the Committee of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET:

1st August 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

Herewith I have the pleasure to transmit you :—

Treasury Account.

Charges Collections.

Charges Zemindary.

Charges General.

and

Toujee Account of the Sylhet District, the month of July 1782, with copies of the same in the Persian and Bengal languages.

New Customs.

The Accountant-General, Revenue Department, having in his letter of the 26th June, directed me to close the financial [accounts] of the district at the end of April, instead of the 30th Baudon as heretofore, I will find it necessary to form a new kistbundee. When completed, which I have reason to think will not be the case soon, I shall take the earliest opportunity of transmitting it to you. The introduction of new customs, especially of so important a nature as change of style in a mountainous country like Sylhet, where the inhabitants are known to be the most litigious in Bengal, so rigidly tenacious of their ancient habits, and jealous of the smallest innovation, you must be sensible, will be attended with some difficulty, as it will create a total alteration in the mofussil respecting the time of holding the Pooneah and collecting the rents from the ryots. It may be attended for the first year with some prejudice to the collections. From the foregoing Toujee account for June, which was calculated for the Sylhet year, viz., from the 30th Bhaddon 1190 to the 1st of Assin 1192 you will perceive a considerable balance outstanding. The only reason I can assign for this apparent deficiency is that my collections are now almost totally at a stand, on account of the Adanlut

established at Sultanssee. The Sylhet revenues are paid, and the mofussil business conducted immediately by the zemindars. They are too poor to afford a salary to naibs. As the principal are now daily removed nearly a hundred miles from their native homes, upon the most frivolous complaints, no further explanation is requisite. Their revenues, of course, are at a stand. Although I think it necessary to inform you of these particulars, I must do that justice due to Mr. Day by saying that he has hitherto paid the greatest attention to my representation, by settling the causes of such zemindars as were under detention with all reasonable expedition, but the suits from Sylhet are too numerous and of too litigious a nature to admit of a speedy decision. The zemindars themselves have lately adopted a plan to evade the demands of Government perhaps not practised in any other parts of these provinces, and which nothing but a most litigious disposition could have invented. This is done by commencing suits against themselves in the name of some of their talukdars or ryots for encroachments and other plausible pretences. Peons from the Court are in consequence sent to apprehend them, and being thus removed they are furnished in their opinion with sufficient reason for withholding their revenues. Was the court stationed at Sylhet instead of Sultanssee, every objection of this kind would be obviated.

Influence of Civil Justice on collection of Revenue.

It is with pain I inform you that during the 5 years I have superintended the Sylhet collections, I never have experienced so much difficulty in realising the revenues as at present. Indeed the zemindars seem to have formed a general combination to evade paying the increase. Lands of such have been most refractory, agreeable to your directions, I exposed to public sale, but from the poverty of the inhabitants, and low estimation lands are held in at Sylhet, no purchasers appeared. The zemindars are not, therefore, kept in awe by publications of this nature, and to carry my order into execution by coercive means, from the situation of the country and long experience, I have found ineffectual. As I flatter myself the Board have not as yet had any reason to be dissatisfied with my conduct, whatever the event may be, I hope you will be rest assured that my endeavors shall not be less exerted in bringing the collections to a favourable issue than hitherto.

Difficulty with collections.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 174.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members

of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET :

3rd August 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

In addition to which I wrote you on the 1st instant, I [am] now under Difficulty in the necessity, and at the same time sorry, to inform you that my revenues are Collections. now almost totally at a stand, the zemindars of Etah, Beezoorah, Chowalless and other principal pergunnahs having been within these few days removed by peons of the Turraff Adawlut to answer to petty complaints referred against them. Circumstanced as I now am, I do not see the least

prospect of having it in my power to render you any satisfactory account whatever of the collections, notwithstanding the unremitted attention to the interest of my Honorable Employers.

Having in my last intruded upon your time by saying a great deal on this subject, more at present would be considered unnecessary. I will only add that as the authority of the Court is by no means established over those parts of the Dacca district which are nominally under its jurisdiction, the most trifling complaints from the litigious inhabitants of Sylhet are immediately listened to, without any benefit arising to the plainants or publick in general, but [inf]initely to the prejudice of the Hon'ble Company.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 174A.

[Received 24th August.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM :
The 15th August 1782.

SIR,

Accounts.

I herewith beg leave to return you your Treasury Accounts and Account Charge for the month of Jaite 1191, as there is no further use for these Treasury Accounts according to the Sylhet months; and I am to request you will be pleased to forward to the Committee of Revenue your Treasury Accounts and Account Charges made out according to the English months, conformable to my letter to you of the 26th June last, for the months of May, June and July, with all possible expedition.

I am, etc.,
CHARLES CROFTES,
*Accountant General, Revenue
Department.*

No. 175.

[Received 20th September.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :
The 19th August 1782.

SIR,

Arrears of
Revenue.

We rely on your using every endeavour on your part to liquidate the balance of cawns 58,274-11-0, which appears due from the districts under your charge at the end of the month of Jyte.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE.
SAMUEL CHARTERS.
C. CROFTES.

No. 176.

[Received 13th September.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

The 29th August 1782.

SIR,

We have received your letters of the 1st and 3rd instant, and having Court at Sul-
referred the subject of them to the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council, tance.
we enclose you an extract of their reply.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

C. CROFTES.

Extract of a letter from the Hon'ble Board under date the 23rd August 1782.

We cannot proceed on a general charge to make any alteration in a public
arrangement, but if you will furnish us with a single instance from the
Collector of Sylhet of the interruptions which have occurred to the collection
of the Revenue from the process of the Court of Dewanny Adawlut at Sul-
tance, we will then proceed and determine upon it.

A true Copy,

W. HAVERKAM.

Secretary.

No. 176A.

[Received 10th October.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM :

The 30th September 1782.

SIR,

Having received from the Right Hon'ble the President and Council at Madras Fa-
Fort St. George the most afflicting accounts of the extreme want and distress mine.
to which the poor of that place are reduced by scarcity of grain, notwith-
standing the regular monthly contribution of the inhabitants and the liberal
relief afforded from Bengal, we are induced to make the subscription for that

charity more public, and desire that you will publish the same, and receive such tenders as may be made to you for the use of the poor at Madras, the amount of which you will remit to Mr. Auriol, our Secretary, by bills on the Committee of Revenue, and send him a list of subscribers, that the same with the subscriptions may be published in the *Bengal Gazette* unless forbid by any particular subscriber."

We are, etc.,

EDWARD WHEELER.

JOHN MCPHERSON.

Enclosure.

Squatters.

Whereas information has been received that sundry parcels of Revenue land without the limits of the town of Calcutta have been seized by the Sheriffs' peons, who have been suffered to take possession quietly and to remain in possession for a considerable time without interruption from the Officers of the Company employed in the collection of the Revenues :—

Notice is hereby given.—

Should any person whatever employed in the collection of the Revenues suffer such an act to take place within the limits of his authority, without opposing it or sending immediate information to the Committee of Revenue, they shall be held answerable for all losses occasioned thereby.

No. 176B.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Council of Revenue.

SYLHET :

1st October 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

Accounts.

Herewith I have the pleasure to enclose you Treasury Account, charges collection, charges zemindary, and charges general for the month of September 1782. Towjee account for the Bengal month of Bawdon, and copies of the whole in the Persian and Bengal languages. By the Towjee Account the balance will appear to you un[favo]rable, but I am in hopes the greatest part of it will be realised during the course of the next and ensuing month.

I have, etc.,

B. LINDSAY.

No. 177.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET :

2nd November 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg leave to request you will order the payment of one thousand Arcot ^{Madras Re-}
Rupees to Mr. Auriol towards the relief of the distressed inhabitants of Madras. ^{lief Fund.}
This amount I will bring to credit in my treasury account for the month
of November.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 178.

To J. P. AURIOL, Esq.

SYLHET :

2nd November 1782.

SIR,

Herewith I beg leave to trouble you with a draft upon the Committee ^{Madras}
of Revenue for Arcot Rs. 1,000—a sum to subscribe towards the relief of the ^{Famine Fund.}
distressed inhabitants of Madras.

am, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 179.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET :

2nd November 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

Enclosed I have the pleasure to transmit you—

Treasury Account.

Charges Collections.

Charges Zemindary.

Charges General.

and

Toujee Account of the Sylhet district for the month of October with
copies of the same in the Persian and Bengal languages.

[I take the liberty] to inform you that I never yet found so much diffi-
culty in collecting the Revenues as at present. At the commencement of the ^{Difficulty}
year, there appeared a general combination throughout the district to withhold ^{with Collec-} tions.

the payment of the increase, but this I have in a great measure got the better of it. Still many of the pergunnahs, as you will perceive by the Toujee, are considerably in arrears of these. It is highly equitable to distinguish such as have not ability to pay from those who have but will not, and who, at the same time, consider themselves, and are considered by others, in a light superior to the other landholders, from being able almost in every instance to evade the orders of the Government. The zemindars of Lunglah pergunnah, Tuppah Mantabed pergunnah, Chowallces, Tappah Muscoorey, Pergunnah Betal, have always particularly distinguished themselves by this refractory disposition, and from the Towjee [accoun]t you will find they are several kists in arr[ears]. From motives of humanity I have hitherto refrained from troubling you with a representation to these effect, but now an example is highly necessary. I, therefore, request your permission, to expose [to] public sale the whole or such part of their [lands] as will make good the balance now due to Government.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 180.

[Received 14th December.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,

Collector of Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM :

11th November 1782.

SIR,

Appointment
to Supreme
Council

The Hon'ble Court of Directors having thought fit to nominate and appoint John Stables, Esq., to the vacancy in this Council caused by the resignation of Philip Francis, Esq., and His Majesty having been pleased to approve of the said nomination ; conformably to the provision made by Act of Parliament in that behalf, we are to inform you that Mr. Stables is arrived at this Presidency, and has taken his seat at the Board.

We are, etc ,

EDWARD WHEELER.

JOHN MCPHERSON.¹

Exd.

H. HALL,

¹ Original signatures. For a note on J. Stables and his opposition to Hastings *Vide* the Calcutta Historical Society's Reprint of Grand's *Narrative of a Gentleman Long Resident, etc.*, page 300.

No. 181.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,
Acting President, and Members
of the Committee of Revenue,
Fort William.

SYLHET:

25th November 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

The cowries transported to Dacca having accumulated to a considerable Cowrie amount, I found my presence there absolutely necessary to negotiate a sale.

This circumstance prevented me from sooner replying to your letter of the 7th October. The accounts therein required of me, I enclose you. In [a] short time, I shall have the pleasure to make a considerable remittance in spe[cie], and to render you an account sale of the cowries from the time the province was made independent of Dacca to the present period.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 182.

To THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS,
Governor-General, and Members
of the Supreme Council.
Fort William.

SYLHET:

14th December 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

It grieves me to be under the necessity of despatching an express to acquaint you with the following particulars. For some days past, since the commencement of the present festival the muslimen, who constitute two-thirds of the inhabitants of Sylhet have shown signs of the most turbulent and unruly disposition. Til this day they continued assembling in numerous bodies, and, being armed, held consultations upon the plain. Their intentions, were at first, not known, further than being prepared for every kind of violence. Mahomedan riots.

At last they determined that the Gentoos¹ should discontinue their religious ceremonies during the Mohorum, and these harmless people were threatened with dreadful consequences if they disobeyed. The Gentoos, in a public body, represented this to me as a grievance they had never before experienced during the present Government, petitioned for redress. I answered that I would do my utmost endeavours to prevent any [distur]bance from taking place. This I did to the utmost of my pow[er] but without effect.

During the whole [of] this day they continued assembling, and towards the [even]ing proceeded to the Dewan's house of worship, and [insisted on] his shutting it up, which he accordingly did, but with this they were not satisfied.

¹ Gentoos, i.e. the Hindus.

Mahomedan
riots.

they insisted also upon the wooden gods being produced and destroyed. This unreasonable [demand] was not complied with, and the Dewan with his priests exposed their [persons] in protection of the images. Intelligence being brought me to this effect, I immediately despatched my z madar of sepoy and the head cannungre, both of them Mussulmen, to endeavour to per-suade the mob to desist. But their reasoning proved in vain, the mob, now [mad] with z al, proceeded to hostilities. They scaled the walls, beat the priest, burnt the houses of worship, and dragged the images in derision through the town. Still greater outrages would have been committed, when I found it my duty to remain no longer inactive. With 30 sepoy, towards the close of the evening, I marched to the place where the mob was assembled, who retired at my approach; from thence to the house where I was told the ringleaders had met. It was situated upon the top of a hill. I myself marched at the head of the sepoy. Upon my arrival at the summit, I found a small body of men drawn out upon the table, completely armed, with their swords drawn, and ready for action. These were of the priest tribe, who hold large portions of land charity from the Government, and were surrounded by their dependents likewise armed. Here I ordered the sepoy to halt, and, attended only with my jemadar of sepoy, I advanced, expostulated with them respecting their mode of conduct, but they were deaf to my words. I told them that a disturbance[had] happened of the [most] serious nature, that I presented myself before [them], not as an enemy, but as a mediator, and for the present, I requested of them to lay aside their arms and accompany me in order that a proper investigation might [take] place. Their answer was short. "We are not dogs of the Ferengies,¹ to obey their orders,—saying this one of the ringleaders advanced and made a blow at me with his tulwar². This the Jamadar fortunately parried. The second blow brought my Jamadar to the ground, when the sepoy in the rear pushed forward. These unfortunate men, mad with enthusiastic zeal, now threw themselves leading upon the detachment, sword in hand, and, before they were finally overcome, desperately wounded twelve of my men. Here the disturbance ended, and altho' two days of the festival still remain, I see no prospect of its renewal, for those people who were of the most turbulent disposition, are no more. Four of them fell in the action and I am happy to find that few or none but these desperadoes have suffered.

As [I] am fully conscious of having acted with the greatest impartiality, at the sametime with coolness and moderation, during the course of this unhappy disturbance, I flatter myself my conduct will not meet with your disapprobation.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

183.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET:

16th December 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

Enclosed I take the liberty to submit to you copy of a letter I yesterday addressed the Governor [General] and Council, as it will give you a full idea

¹ Ferengies i.e., European.

² Tulwar, i.e., a sword.

Mahomedan
Riots.

[of] the origin and sequel of a disturbance, which happened two days ago. I will add that the principal Mussalmen have since obeyed my summons of attendance, and endeavoured to apologise for the conduct of their sect in general upon the present occasion, which they attributed [to the] enthusiastic madness of a few individuals, who suffered for their folly. This the language held beforeprivate opinion—is I cannot say, but in whatever manner this unhappy affair is represented by people of the different persuasions, I am conscious of having done my duty and no more. As the Mussalmen, that day, were not in a situation to listen to reason, I requested of the Dewan, and other Gentoos to shut up their Tagoor barrys, or houses of worship, for the remainder of the festival, which they immediately complied with, but this condescension, so far from appeasing, irritated the multitude, and, has not the ringleaders of the disturbance fallen, I am persuaded much bloodshed must have happened.

The Gentoos, at least the few who carry arms, soon after assembled. 200 senasees were likewise ready to join them, and, though far inferior to the Mussalmen in point of number, they seemed desirous of wiping off the insult by the effusion of blood, or to perish in the attempt. To prevent this I interposed, and had nearly fallen a sacrifice to their enthusiastic madness. I have more than once taken an opportunity of representing to you the litigious and turbulent dispos[ition] of the Sylhet inhabitants; and I am sorry to say it has [exhibited] itself in a most apparent degree since the removal of the courts of judicature. I hope you will excuse the liberty [I now take] in offering my opinion that the resident of Sylhet, which is not a champaign country, cannot be vested with too much authority in order to keep the natives under legal control. Here this officer of Government ought [not only] be [res]pected but feared. Whilst he officiates simply as Collector, he is considered as acting in an inferior capacity, and when the Revenues are paid that his powers, of course, cease. At present, every man looks upon himself as unaccountable to any for his actions: one sows the grains and the other reaps it; and, at this moment there is endless confusion through the district. From this I do not mean to throw any reflection upon the Turaff Adawlut, though the distance from thence to Sylhet is too great and the road dangerous at many seasons of the year. Now have I the smallest ambition to be again vested with judicial powers, for it is an office when properly attended to infinitely laborious and when joined to other duties of my station, (although I formerly went through both cheerfully) may now prove too much for my constitution to bear, but should the Hon'ble Board think proper to confer that honor upon me again, I will with pleasure take charge of it. An additional salary, as Judge or Superintendent, is unnecessary, my present allowances from Government being upon the most liberal footing. With the aid of my Assistant, I could still discharge the important trust reposed in me with convenience to myself and to the satisfaction of the inhabitants.

I am, etc.,

B. LINDSAY.

No. 184.

[Received 1st January 1783.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,

FORT WILLIAM :

The 24th December 1782

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 14th instant, and we, on your representation of the late unfortunate affair, do entirely approve of your conduct on that occasion and lest the turbulent disposition of the people should create further evils, we have ordered two companies of sepoys to be sent you from Dacca ; and we desire you will cause to be apprehended all who were most active in the sedition, and sequester the Milky and Lackorage lands belonging to them, until the pleasure of the Board be known : that such of the persons as you shall apprehend be delivered over to the Foujedarry Court for trial, but as the Officers of the Court may be most of them of the same religion as those concerned, and may have had a part in the fray, we direct you to appoint proper people to attend the Court and take down the evidences of the parties, which, when closed, are to be transmitted to us ; and care must be taken that none of the parties are released until our final orders are received. You will also immediately assemble the principals of the Gentoos among the sufferers from the late riot, and afford them every redress in your power, giving them assurances from us of a reparation for any substantial wrong which may have been done them.

We are, etc.,

WARREN HASTINGS.

JOHN MCPHERSON.

JOHN STABLES.

No. 184A.

Extract from the Lives of the Lindsays, Vol. III, pages 210-217.

Mahomedan
Riots.

During my residence in India, when our affairs were less prosperous than at present, the country was more or less convulsed by occasional commotions. I speak of the period when Mr. Hastings visited Benares in the year 1782, and the temporary revolt of Rajah Cheit Sing and Vizier Ali. By a well-constructed plan they had nearly succeeded in taking Mr. Hastings and his body-guard prisoners ; had this been effected, the whole of India would have been in arms and open revolt, being justly disaffected ; as it was, there was considerable agitation in many of the provinces of Bengal, and it was partially felt even at Dacca and Sylhet.

At this last place the Mussulmen had become uncommonly violent. The period of the Moharum, or annual festival of the Islam faith, was approaching, when a deputation from the Hindoo inhabitants came privately to inform me that they had certain intelligence that the Mahomedans meditated an assault upon our government on that day, and that it would likely commence by an attack on the Hinloo temples in the town. I told them that I could not believe it, as they had hitherto shown no indication of riot.

My military force, at that time, being a good deal scattered in the province, not more than forty or fifty men could be mustered fit for duty; and I desired my Jamaudar, or black officer, to have all in readiness in the case of affray. Nothing occurred during the day of festival until five in the evening, when the Hindoo inhabitants rushed to my house in numbers, covered with marks of violence they had received from the Mahomedans. I went into my room for a few minutes, dressed my pistols, and gave them to my favourite black servant, desiring him to keep near me, and, if he saw me in danger, to put them into my hand. I carried a light horseman's sword under my arm. There was no time for delay, as the town was on fire in different directions. With my small force I marched to the place where the crowd was collected, and found, to my surprise, that the numbers were much more considerable than I expected. As I advanced, they retired to a strong position upon a hill, and there took post. I followed them to the top and drew up my sepoys on a table-ground directly opposite to them, where they stood with shouldered arms.

I then went forward, with my black officer, to hold a parley on the spot.

I found their leader a priest of considerable rank, at the head of three hundred men. He was insolent in his manner; I was perfectly calm. I told him that I presented myself before him in the capacity of head-magistrate, that I was informed affray had happened, which I would investigate next day, and render justice where due, that my object at that moment was to compel him to lay down his arms and retire peaceably. He immediately drew his sword, and, exclaiming with a loud voice, "This is the day to kill or to die; the reign of the English is at an end," aimed a heavy blow at my head; this I was fortunate enough to parry, but he struck so hard that my sword was broken, and little more than the hilt remained in my hand. My black servant at the same moment thrust a pistol into my hand, which I instantly fired, and the priest fell,—and so close were we in contact that his clothes were set on fire.

My sepoys in the rear, seeing my dangerous situation, discharged a platoon while I stood in front, from which I miraculously escaped. My black officer and I rushed back into the ranks in time to prevent their giving way; we then charged with bayonets, and drove the armed multitude over the hill. At that moment there lay an old man wounded at my feet, and a sepoy was on the point of transfixing him with the bayonet, when I diverted the point with my foot, and saved the poor man. I mention this circumstance, as it is connected with a story hereafter.

I had now time to look about me and survey the mischief that had been done in so short a time. The high priest and his two brothers were lying dead on the ground, and many of his dependents were wounded; on my side, one sepoy was killed and six wounded. Most fortunately my people did not give way,—if they had, every European in the place would have

fallen. I now asked for my assistant, Mr., who I supposed had been killed; he soon appeared, and candidly informed me that the scene was too much for his nerves, and that he had retired during the combat.

My next duty was to convey the wounded men home, and dress their wounds; having no medical assistance, my situation for the night was not a little alarming; my rope-maker, of the name of Job Hinton, was an able hand with the needle, and he was busily employed in sewing up the wounded men lying in my hall. I was ignorant at that moment as to the extent of the revolt in the town, and demanded the immediate attendance of the principal Mahomedan inhabitants as hostages during the night; and I had them all in the house, when a person of the name of Beck and several other Europeans came running into my room for protection, assuring me that the people were assembling in force, and coming to burn my house,—but it proved a false alarm; the people were marching in solemn procession to bury their dead by torchlight. I now thought it my duty to send out a military force, and let it be known that no honours could be allowed to those who had thus rebelled against the existing government. A petition was presented next day in humble terms by the relatives of the high-priest and others who had fallen when no objection was made to their private interment.

This event was of too serious a nature not to be reported to government; they immediately ordered a reinforcement of troops, supposing me under temporary difficulty; but the tumult soon subsided, and the order was countermanded.

In order to shew the troublesome people I had to deal with, I shall mention the following anecdote. An inhabitant of the village of Sylhet, by trade silversmith and of some note, requested a private interview. He told me that one of the Cusseah chiefs had lately come down from the mountains, and lodged next him in the town,—that, from circumstances which had appeared, he was afraid a conspiracy of an alarming nature was carrying on, of which I was not aware,—and produced a letter he had picked up, addressed to my commandant of sepoys; the language, he said, he did not fully understand, but advised me to send for the Cusseah interpreter. I accordingly did so. The man, upon reading the paper, started and hastily shut the door; the letter was addressed as described—to my commandant of sepoys. This person was possessed of my full confidence, and I was not a little alarmed and mortified to find that he was in correspondence with the hill chief to betray and put me to death. The letter contained the following words:—“I perfectly understand your last communication, and will act accordingly. On Monday morning, two hours before break of day, I will surround the house of your chief, and take him and his whole establishment prisoners. You, and your sepoys who are in my interest, must be on the watch, and shall be amply rewarded.”

This was indeed enough to startle me. I retired to my room, and dressed my pistols—I then sent my European servant for Reim Khan, my commandant, and told him that I had ever considered him as a trusty man and faithful servant, but I had some information against him, which made me alter my opinion. “You are now under arrest, and”—turning to my servant—“there is a brace of pistols—watch this man during the night, and if any resistance is offered, or a rescue attempted, shoot him through the head.” The commandant then delivered up his sword, and I retired.

To the informer in the adjoining room I held a different language. "My friend," said I, "I am infinitely obliged to you for your information on this occasion, as you have probably saved me and the settlement from the greatest calamity,—and, be assured, you shall be amply rewarded when the conspiracy is fully traced; the commandant is now under confinement, and the proofs must soon appear. At the same time it is necessary to preserve the appearance of justice. It is my duty, as chief Magistrate, to place you also under custody. I must also send to your house for your trunks containing your papers, and have them examined in open durbar." The man appeared in much agitation, and asked if such were the reward of his services? I promised him full justice in due time. In a few hours his papers were before me and inspected, when a scene of villany appeared which proved him an offender of no common standing. I found that the letter he had produced, and also the seal attached to it, were forgeries; and various attempts were found among the papers till they had reached perfection,—and even the government official seals were done with the utmost nicety. He was of course consigned over to the regular courts for trial, and my commandant received public honours, to prove my approbation of his past services.

I had never hitherto been in the practice of riding out in the country with attendants of any kind; I preserved the same plan, knowing that, if I had betrayed any fear, there would be no end to alarms; but an incident occurred soon after, to shew that fanatical zeal had been roused to resent the death of the high priest, which made me more cautious in future.

My friend Robert Hamilton (a captain in the army, son of a gentleman of the same name, formerly laird of Kilbrackmont) came to pay me a visit. We were sitting together at dinner, which had just come in, when my servant informed me that a fakeer, or mendicant priest, wished to speak with me on urgent business. Although the hour was unseasonable, I desired him to be admitted. I was sitting at the top of the table, Hamilton at the bottom, next the door,—the priest entered and stood immediately behind him. He began his story by informing me that he had been robbed on entering the province, and, being plundered of all he possessed, he looked to me for redress. There was an irritation in his manner and a wildness in his eye, and his right hand rested in the cummerbund, or cloth which encircled his body. His appearance alarmed me; therefore, without changing my voice or manner, I said, "Hamilton! slip behind that man and knock him down,"—he hesitated—"Obey my orders,"—Hamilton was a strong man, and, rising up, with a blow from behind laid the priest prostrate, but, in the act of falling, he aimed a blow at Hamilton with his poniard, which he had held concealed, and, finding he had missed his aim, immediately buried the steel in his own breast. The priest fainted from loss of blood:—when, having recovered from his swoon, I asked him what his motive was for this atrocious act, his answer was that of a madman, "That he was a messenger from God, sent to put to death the unbelievers." My suspicions were thus fully verified, and, had I not acted as I did, I must have fallen a sacrifice.

The poor creature lingered some weeks and then died, but never altered his statement. Instances, such as I have described, frequently occurred to me, owing to the annual assemblage of fanatics at the shrine of the tutelary saint.

Before I quit the subject of the foregoing affray, I must return to the death of the high-priest, and the old man lying wounded at my feet upon the top of the hill, it being connected with the following singular occurrence. In my domestic circle, long after my return to this country, I had more than once told the story relative to the death of the high-priest. I was listened to with interest, but was evidently allowed the latitude of a traveller,—when, more than twenty years afterwards, my veracity was fully confirmed in the presence of my whole family. In taking my usual morning's ride along the coast, I passed the door of our clergyman, my worthy friend, Mr. Small. There I perceived a man standing, dressed in full Eastern costume, with turban, mustachios, trowsers, girdle and sandals. To his evident astonishment, I accosted him in his own language,—“Where were you born?”—“In Calcutta.”—“Toot bant, it is a lie,” said I; “your accent betrays you; you must belong to a different part of the country.”—“You are right, Sir,” he replied, “but how could I expect to be cross-questioned in a foreign land?” With a salaam to the ground, he asked my name and where I lived. I pointed to the house on the hill, and desired him to call upon me next morning.

He came accordingly, and my numerous family were all present at our conversation in the Hindostani language. I first asked his name.—“Seyd-ullah,” he answered. “How came you to tell me a lie, the first question I ever asked you?” “You took me by surprise, Sir, by addressing me in my own language. The fact is, I was born at a place called Sylhet, in the kingdom of Bengal, and came here as servant to Mr. Small's son, who was purser of the ship. A gentleman of your name,” he continued, “was well known in that country, and in London I endeavoured to find him out, but in vain,—nowhere could I trace him.”—“Suppose,” said I, looking him full in the face, “that I am the man?” He started back with horror in his countenance—“What? did you kill the Pier Zada?” (the son the high-priest). “Yes,” I replied, “I did; he attacked me sword in hand, and fell a victim to his own rashness.” Seyd-ullah immediately recovered his composure. When I asked him what was the opinion of the people on that subject, he answered, “some approved your conduct, others disapproved”; and, putting his hand on his breast, with a slight inclination, said, “I was but a boy.”—“Where were you during the affray, Syed-ullah?” said I. “On the top of the hill, near the houses;” and, with a harsher tone, he added, “you killed my father also.” “Was he an old man, Syed-ullah?” “Yes.” “Your father was not killed in action; I saved his life myself,—am I right or wrong?” He said, “you are right; he was severely wounded, and died in consequence some months afterwards.”

Seyd-ullah confirmed, in broken English, my former details on the subject. He would not allow that his father was actually the slave of the high-priest, but styled him his salt-eater, or dependent. He said that the Pier Zada and his two brothers fell in the affray, with several others of their adherents, but would give no account how the disturbances originated, further than that the country was at that moment in a convulsed state. He afterwards, at the desire of the ladies, entered into a minute detail of the history of his country, stating in every instance things as he wished them to appear, not as they actually were. He was asked what was his particular talent? to which he replied, that he had been long famed for dressing the best curry in the world,

and that he always carried about with him part of the ingredients. He was desired to return next day, when the other materials should be provided.

The following morning the family governess appeared as usual at breakfast; her manners were embarrassed, and she evidently wished to communicate something of importance. "I am sensible," said she, "that no attention should be paid to dreams, but," bursting into tears, "when a scene is represented in such dreadful colours as it occurred to me last night, I should be more than culpable if I did not do everything in my power to avert the calamity with which the whole family is threatened. I dreamt, Mrs. Lindsay, that a black man came from the extremity of the East, and poisoned Mr. Lindsay and his whole family; and I beg and entreat, as you value your lives and happiness, that the curry may not be put on the table, or the consequences may be dreadful!"

In spite of this good lady's advice, Seyd-ullah attended at the proper hour, and prepared a curry to suit my palate, when, just before dinner, an audience was demanded by Mrs. Lawson, the old house keeper, in the next room, when, with much agitation, she said, "you know, Madam, I am not apt to be troublesome about trifles, but I think it my duty to mention that I narrowly watched the dressing of this curry, and not in one single instance could I trace the man tasting the dish himself. I told him he surely had not put insufficient salt, but no—no—he knows too well what he is about; therefore pray, Ma'am, prevent Mr. Lindsay from eating this curry." The same remonstrance was re-echoed by my whole family,—never was a dish better dressed, and never did I make a more hearty dinner.

I was well aware of Seyd-ullah's reasons for not tasting the curry. The fowls of which it was composed were killed by the cook,—had he drawn the blood, and said the usual prayer, he would have had no scruples. And thus finishes the story of Seyd-ullah and the Pier Zada.

No. 185.

[Received 13th February.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY, ESQ.,

Collector at Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA:

30th January 1783.

SIR,

The Account Settlement and Kistabundy of Sylhet which you transmitted to us, is drawn out according to the Bengal year 1189, instead of being made conformable to the Veloyetty year 1190. We desire you will rectify it, and return it to us, for which purpose you will receive it herewith. Accounts.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

C. CROFTES

No. 186.

[Received 17th February.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY, ESQ.,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :
3rd February 1783.

Judicial
authority.

SIR,

Accompanying you will receive an extract of a letter from the Hon'ble the Governor-General and Council.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE,
C. CROFTES.

Extract of a letter from Hon'ble Board, dated the 28th January 1783.

We have already written to the Collector of Sylhet respecting the disturbances which were lately occasioned there, and, with regard to his being vested with judicial authority, it remains for consideration till the business of the Adawluts is again taken up, when his application will be referred to.

A true copy,
W. HAVERKAM,
Secretary.

No. 187.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.,
Governor-General, and Members of
the Supreme Council.

SYLHET :

17th February 1783.

HON'BLE SIR AND GENTLEMEN,

Mahomedan
Riots.

I was a few days ago honoured with your letter of the 24th December, containing your orders in consequence of the late disturbance. In obedience to your commands, I have apprehended several of the persons who were most active, and will send them to Dacca, in order to take their trial before the Criminal Court established at that place. Here, I am sorry to say, no redress can be expected upon this occasion. Meer Ibrahim Oman, who has presided as Darogha for these ten years past, and with whose conduct I have every reason to be satisfied as well as the natives, is just removed from his station. This I can only attribute to representations made by the Mussalman inhabitants to the Nabob of Meer Ibrahim's conduct during the holy days, and of his having [satisfied] a much stronger inclination to support the cause of the Gentoos

than that of his own sect, I must acknowledge I was not a little indebted to his assistance in preventing the disturbance from becoming more general. I, therefore, take the liberty of recommending him as a person fully deserving of the countenance of the Hon'ble Board. Ordinance asked for.

With regard of the re-inforcement of two companys of sepoy's from Dacca, as I found the strength at Sylhet fully sufficient for the purpose of restoring tranquillity, as well as for apprehending the parties concerned, I thought it unnecessary to call for their assistance.

I now beg leave to request that the Hon'ble Board will be pleased to order me from the stores two small field pieces, 3-pounders. Since my residence at Sylhet, I have sometimes found myself in a situation where they might have been of infinite service. Indeed, as a frontier province, and surrounded by troublesome neighbours, they are absolutely requisite for the protection of the settlement. An allowance for licensors is unnecessary, as all expenses of this nature can be defrayed from the established sebundee.

I am, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 187A.

To JOHN SHORN, Esq.,

and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET:

4th March 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

In reply to your letter of the 17th ultimo, I take the liberty of acquainting you that there is no regular body of military stationed at Sylhet. In consequence of the Dacca Militia sepoy's being recalled, the Hon'ble Board thought proper to approve of the Sebundee¹ establishment, which I submitted to their consideration. The men raised for this purpose at first only consisted of burgundosses and bowmen, but, finding a small corps regularly disciplined useful upon many occasions, I thought prudent to raise a complete company consisting of 125 sepoy's with their respective officers, which I clothed and armed in the usual manner. Sylhet is a frontier province and liable to frequent incursions of the hill people and neighbouring freebooters. I am always obliged to station two-thirds of the force at the established tannās under the mountains, from whence they are immediately assembled upon emergency. Enclosed is a return of the force now at Sylhet, with an abstract of the pay of the men, officers, etc. Military.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

¹ *Sebundee*. Perhaps from Persian *Sihbundi*, soldiers engaged on three-monthly payment. The term was applied to local infantry troops until as late as at least 1860.

Account of the pay and allowances of the Sebundee Corps stationed at Sylhet for the protection of the province.

			Rs.
1 Hazary	...	...	30
50 Burgundosses	...	...	250
			<hr/>
			280
1 Subidar	...	...	60
2 Jemindars	...	...	40
8 Havildars	...	...	80
8 Naiks	...	...	64
2 Tom toms	...	...	10
1 Trumpeter	...	...	5
125 Sepoys	...	...	625
			<hr/>
			884
Clothing, arms, ammunition, magazine charges, repairs of the different Tannahs, and every other contingency ...			196

Sa. Rs. 1,360

Disposition.

Tannahs.	Subadar.	Jemadar.	Havildar.	Naiks.	Tom toms.	Trumpeters.	Sepoys.	Burgundosses.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
At Ponduah ...	...	1	1	2	...	...	15	15
„ Inhamuttee ...	...	...	1	1	...	...	10	10
„ Sologur ...	...	...	1	2	...	...	15	10
„ Lahore ¹ ...	...	...	1	2	...	...	15	15
„ Sylhet ...	1	1	2	1	1	1	35	...
Temporary commands ...	...	...	2	...	...	...	35	...
Total ...	1	2	8	8	1	1	125	50

SYLHET, THE 4TH MARCH 1783.

(ROBERT LINDSAY.)

Laour.

No. 188.

[Received 10th March.]

TO THE HONORABLE ROBERT LINDSAY, ESQ.,

Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

20th February 1783.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 1st January last with your Towjee Accounts. account for the month of Aughun.

We cannot but remark a neglect in omitting to send us explanations of the balance and refer you to the Orders of the Hon'ble Board communicated to you in our letter of the 3rd instant.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

No. 189.

[Received 12th March.]

TO THE HONORABLE ROBERT LINDSAY, ESQ.,

Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

27th February 1783.

SIR,

Enclosed we send you a memorandum of sums due to the Fongedarry Phousdari. Department for the payment of which application has been made to us by the Nabob Mahamed Reza Cawn, and desire you will discharge the original vouchers for the above sums, on their being presented to you.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

C. CROFTES.

SYLHET.

	Rs.	s.	p.
1. Receipt for the salaries of Meer Jowad Ulla Fongeder, etc., from the 1st of Sawun to the end of the same month	360	15	0
2. Receipt for repairing the Cutcharry and Jail in the year 1183 in the name of Ibraheem Daraga	39	1	5
Total	Rs. 400	0	5

No. 190.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the
Committee of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET :

12th March 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

Mr. Archibald Burnett, my Agent at Dacca, acquaints me that under date the 27th ultimo, he transmitted you two bills of exchange amounting to 50,000 sica rupees, *vizt* :—

1. For Rs. 30,000 drawn by Robert Hunter on Mr. Fergusson, at 10 days sight.
2. For Rs. 20,000 drawn by Ignatius D. Barros on Mr. Joseph Barretto¹ at 20 days sight.

These sums being recovered, I request you will give me credit for the same amount the Sylhet Revenue.

Carries.

The low prices couries now bear at Dacca and indeed all over the country, chiefly owing to the great quantities imported from the Maldivies Islands must account for my remittances not having hitherto more regular.

I have, etc.,

R. LINSDAY.

No. 191.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the
Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET :

17th March 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

In reply to your letter of the 3rd instant, I must inform you that there are no public, and but few private seminaries of any kind for the education of youth within the limits of my jurisdiction.²

I have, etc.,

R. LINSDAY.

No. 192.

[Received 21st March 1783.]

To THE HONORABLE ROBERT LINSDAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

10th March 1783.

SIR,

We have received your toujee account for the month of Poore, and are sorry to remark the balance is so considerable. With respect to the plea¹ of

¹ For Joseph Barretto and his family, see *Bengal, Past and Present*, Vol. II, pp. 1 and 527-8.

² In 1781, Hastings founded the Madrasa or Mahomedan College at Calcutta.

the zemindars founded on the heavy increase, we cannot admit them, but direct that you recover the amount from them.

In case the zemindars of Chautgaut should not attend, agreeable to the publication you have made for their appearance, or cause some persons to attend on their parts, and make good the revenues due from them, you will proceed to a sale of their lands.

We are, etc.,
SAMUEL CHARTERS.
C. CROFTES.

No. 193.

TO JONATHAN DUNCAN,¹ ESQR.,
P. R. Revenue Department.

SYLHET :
17th March 1783.

SIR,

I am duly favoured with your letter of the 4th instant, desiring me to send you the following papers, *vizt*:

1. Account Jumma Wassil Bankee for the last Sylhet year up to the end of Baudon.
2. An account of the receipts and disbursements of the said year.

In reply I must inform you that the accounts of this Province have not for many months past been kept according to the Sylhet, but the Bengal year, conformable to the orders of the committee and Accountant General. If you are desirous of having an abstract of the accounts of last year, they shall be immediately transmitted to you in the Persian and Bengal languages.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 194.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS,
Governor-General, and Members of the
Supreme Council of Revenue.

SYLHET :
22nd March 1783.

HON'BLE SIR AND GENTLEMEN,

Through the channel of the Committee, I some time ago took the liberty of representing to you the great inconvenience the inhabitants of the Province

¹ Jonathan Duncan, Preparer of Reports to the Revenue Department, became Resident at Benares, where he distinguished himself equally by his ability as a revenue officer, (see Seton-Kerr : *Cornwallis*, p. 121) and by his human measures for abolishing infanticide. He was Governor of Bombay for sixteen years (1795 to 1811). He died and was buried at Bombay.

labour under in consequence of the removal of the Dewany Court of Judicature. While the authority of the Court of Phogedary Adaulat still existed, evil-minded and disorderly people were kept under some restraint, but this Court was likewise removed about a month ago. In so extensive a district as Sylhet, where the natives are well known to be the most turbulent of any in Bengal, the consequence of being deprived of regular Courts of Justice, which have been stationed at the Capital from time immemorial, is too apparent to require description.

It grieves me to say that the most disorderly confusion now prevails throughout the district. Murder and the most greivous crimes are daily committed with impunity, for there is no person either to take cognizance of complaints or apprehend delinquents. I therefore, beg leave to lay before you, the general petition of the inhabitants that the Court of Phogedary be re-established within the town of Sylhet.

It does not behove me to say anything further respecting the re-establishment of the Dewanny Adaulut. In a former letter I took the liberty of offering my service to undertake the management without any additional expense to the Government, which I hope in due time will come under the consideration of the Hon'ble Board.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 195.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.,
Governor General, and Members of the Supreme Council.
SYLHET:

29th March 1783.

HON'BLE SIR AND GENTLEMEN,

Ship-building. I take the liberty of acquainting you that I have built under the mountains the following vessels which will be completely fitted ready for sea as soon as the northerly monsoon sets in:—

				Tons.
The Sylhet	...	...	...	400
The Highland Queen	...	...	...	260
The Beauty	...	...	...	160
Tyger	...	...	...	150
The Buffalow	...	...	...	140
The Rhinocerus	...	...	...	140

As this is an undertaking never before attempted from these parts, I flatter myself it will meet the encouragement of the Hon'ble Board. Possessed with this hope, I beg leave to request that you will be pleased to allow me the established freight for 15,000 bags of rice to Madras.

The rice of the best cargo kind I will undertake to purchase at Backergunge for the Hon'ble Company, and load free of all charges for Re. 1 *per maund*.

Ship building.

On this account I expect no advance, nor that any part of the freight shall become due until the vessels which I propose despatching the Hurringattah¹ Passage in the Sunderbunds are actually sailed. I further beg leave to represent to the Hon'ble Board that there is very large quantity of couries lying unsaleable at Dacca. The re-importing of the couries will be of infinite service to the Province already drained of its currency by a continual exportation without any visible importation, and I will readily accept of them at the bazar price in payment for the hire and freight.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 195A.

[*Extract from the Lives of the Lindseys, Volume III.*]

The French fleet had, in the interval, been more successful by sea, and completely destroyed our trade in the Bay of Bengal; the consequence was, that the greatest scarcity of provisions, nearly approaching to famine, prevailed over the Coromandel coast, to obviate which, our Government held out the most liberal encouragement to any person who would engage to deliver a certain quantity of grain at Madras. With more zeal than prudence, I tendered an offer to land at that place, within the period of eight months, in ships of my own building, five thousand tons of rice. The offer was immediately accepted, and to work I went.

The mountains of Sylhet produced wood and iron in abundance; we had also canoe-builders and muslin-weavers, and they were taught to build ships and make canvas. But the difficulties I had to encounter in building, launching, and equipping a fleet of twenty ships, so far from the sea, were beyond belief, and let no mortal attempt so wild a speculation again. The principal difficulty I had to contend with was the short space allowed me by the climate. The periodical rains rise to a certain height, and then as rapidly subside, leaving the bed of the river dry for nearly six months of the year, so that I had no more than four months to build and launch the vessels. I had a British ship-builder, a block-maker, a canvas and rope maker, to conduct the different departments, but it required the utmost exertion to get the ships despatched in time, before they were effectually closed in for the year.

Most fortunately, my health never failed me throughout the Herculean struggle, which eventually terminated better than I expected. My ships reached the salt water in safety and in time, and were loaded on the part of Government. At this time a gentleman high in office, and even more speculative than myself, had long coveted my contract, and more than once hinted at my giving him a share of the concern; that I declined, but, finding the business too difficult to manage at a distance from my abode, I proposed to transfer the whole concern to him at prime cost. Most fortunately for me he closed with my offer, and thus relieved me from a sea of trouble.

¹. See La Touche: *Journals of Major James Rennell*, page 91. The Haringhata estuary or "Deerford".

Ship-building. In undertaking a concern of such magnitude, and fraught with the most serious difficulties, my prudence may certainly be called in question. In my own defence, I must fully acknowledge it was rash, but the idea originated upon the most disinterested principles of patriotism. A famine was raging on the coast, and we had no ships to carry down provisions, excepting such as were built on the spur of the moment, by people as zealous as myself, in situations similar to my own; and such exertions were assuredly of the highest importance to the Government under which we lived, and had the good effect of proving the resources of the interior upon emergency. Much credit was also due to the ingenuity of the inhabitants, and their readiness to assist in forwarding our views, when public disaster called for more than common exertion. Upon this occasion the inhabitants of Sylhet proved themselves conspicuously deserving of every commendation on my part, and entitled to my own personal gratitude.

In conducting these ships to the sea, near to that country already mentioned, called the Sunderbunds, there is a wide and uninhabited range of land abounding with tigers, buffaloes, and every wild animal of the forest. Upon coming to anchor with the flood-tide, I went on shore to take a walk, and soon after espied a large herd of cattle at a great distance on the plain. A fisherman passing by at that moment in his canoe, I asked him what they were? He said they were wild buffaloes pasturing. I observed animals of a smaller description among them, and asked what they were? He answered that they were different kinds of deer, who cling to the buffalo for protection from the tigers, which are here very numerous. I asked him if the buffaloes were particularly fierce to those who approach them? In reply he said, "Be very cautious how you wound the buffalo, but you may take what liberties you please with the deer." Upon this, I went again on board, and armed myself and servants with ball ammunition. Many of them shot well, and I was much inclined for some good venison. I put on a green silk gown, not to appear conspicuous.

As we advanced towards the numerous herd it appeared to be a service of no small danger. I took a long shot at a reindeer without effect, the buffaloes tearing the earth with their hoofs, and staring at us wildly. We had previously agreed, that, should any of them run at us, we should all immediately fire, and bring them up, but for this we had no occasion. We continued to advance within fifty yards, and, in less than half an hour, we dropped more than twenty of the largest red-deer. We then gave a general shout, when the buffaloes retired. One hundred men were sent to us from the fleet, but our whole force could not carry on board more than ten deer; the vultures and other birds of prey fell heir to the rest, and I was not a little pleased to find myself and party safe on board after the dangerous amusement of the day.

After having my ships in a safe situation, I pushed down to Calcutta to make the necessary arrangements as to delivering them over, as well as the favourable contract I had from Government—but this proved a more difficult operation than I was aware of. Difficulties and objections of a serious nature occurred but, as I had fortunately introduced into our mutual agreement a clause referring all points of misunderstanding to the arbitration of a mutual friend, he, with a liberal hand, settled everything to our mutual satisfaction. By this arrangement I certainly lost at least £ 3,000; but

the gentleman who purchased the concern had a sad prospect before him, as ^{Ship-building} all the ships were of course built of green wood, to answer a temporary emergency, and could not last long. Under such circumstances I was fortunate in closing the concern.

A couple of months' residence at Calcutta enabled me to retrace my journey to Sylhet. In returning through the Sunderbunds a circumstance occurred which had nearly put an end to my worldly career. For the sake of expedition, I had embarked on board a fast-going express-boat. In the middle of the night, when passing through a rapid river with an ebb-tide, by a rush of the people to one side the boat was almost filled with water, and nearly upset. I jumped up, demanding what was the matter, and was answered that a tiger had leapt on board, and carried away the gulleah or bowman. I said it was impossible, for we were at that moment going seven knots an hour, and impelled forward with a very rapid tide; the lantern was produced, and the most convincing proof appeared of the truth of their assertion. The tiger, in his exertion to get on board, had left much of his hair in the gun-wale, and in the morning we discovered one of his claws in the seam of the deck. But the bowman was gone. The claw remained in my possession for many years.

Immediately after this accident happened I dropped anchor, and in the morning rowed to a wood-boat, also at anchor in the stream; the man told us the same tiger had attempted to board him the night before, but, having boarding nettings fixed up, he was easily beaten off.

Tigers are in no part of the world more numerous than at Sylhet, but as their natural food of sheep, goats, and deer is abundant, I hardly knew an instance of their attacking a human creature, nor do the inhabitants hold them in terror; but in the country I have described their character is totally changed in consequence of starvation. The deer in these regions are innumerable, but, the whole country being thrown some inches under water every spring-tide, though it operates in favour of the forest-trees, the underwood is completely destroyed, so that the tiger, finding no shelter to enable him to pounce on his prey, is famished in the midst of plenty; he is therefore compelled to take to the water for food, and thus becomes in a manner amphibious.

I returned to Sylhet with the same rapidity I usually practised, and I am sorry to say the reader will find me again actively employed in building a ship, double the size of any I had hitherto constructed. She was a beautiful vessel, called the *Augusta*, four hundred tons burthen, pierced for eighteen guns. She was the phenomenon of the mountains, and the Cusseahs came from great distances to see her—to them, no doubt, a wonderful sight the first, and without doubt the last, of the same magnitude ever built in that part of the world. We had now gained experience in the science of building, and, instead of looking forward to a regular launch, as happened the former year, we dug a large dock, and therein laid the keel, trusting to the periodical rains to float her off the ensuing year. I have since that period puzzled many a nautical man with my story of building a ship of four hundred tons burthen, three hundred miles from the sea, at least fifty miles from water to float her—and all perfectly true; the periodical rains cleared up the mystery.

Ship-building. I was in some measure led into this wild speculation a second time by an amateur of science, who drew beautifully. The plan originated with his genius; he proposed to take an equal share of the concern, and I could not do less than call the ship after his daughter, Augusta. The laborious part entirely remained with me; when money was required he cheerfully paid his proportion, but in the sequel, I had to contend with many difficulties, from which I could only be extricated by my own bodily activity and sound constitution, which happily never forsook me. I accompanied the vessel through a most intricate and hitherto unexplored navigation to the vicinity of the sea. On the passage down the ship frequently grounded, but, being furnished with good anchor boats, we hove her off without difficulty. My troubles I thought now at an end, having anchored at a place called Luckypore, near to the confluence of the Ganges and Brahmaputra, two of the largest rivers in the world. Captain Thomas, who was named to the command of the ship, here joined me, and I had the satisfaction to find in him a man fully deserving the most implicit confidence. This was a point of most essential importance to me upon the present occasion.

Next morning he and I embarked in a good sailing boat, and crossed and recrossed this great river, at this place full twenty miles broad, and, after sounding the channel with every attention, nowhere could we find more than fourteen feet water, the Augusta, with her water and stores, drawing full seventeen; I leave you, my friends,—to judge in what an awkward situation I was placed, my ship and cargo, value at the least £ 40,000, hermetically sealed up in fresh water, without the prospect of ever reaching the ocean. The ridicule I had to encounter for a few hours vexed me—but the question now was, how to get out of the scrape. Two row-boats well manned were now ordered; Captain Thomas embarked in the one, and I took charge of the other. Our object was to abandon the large rivers as impracticable, and to search for a passage to sea through the narrow channels, or creeks, with which this wide delta abounds; and we succeeded in finding deeper water in the river called Harringotta, a smaller branch of the Ganges.

Here my partner, Mr. R., joined me, and assisted me in preparing instructions to Captain Thomas respecting the voyage now before him. The ship was destined to Straits of Malacca, with a valuable cargo of opium, and eventually to stop at Macao, in China; and I proposed to my partner to insert a clause authorizing Captain Thomas to dispose of the ship also, provided a favourable opportunity occurred.

It was now the beginning of December, and the most favourable season for getting clear of this dismal and dangerous navigation, the water as smooth as a millpond, and well it so happened, for we had still to cross a bar of ten leagues' extent, on which there was not more than six inches more water than the vessel drew; but, as I had previously sounded, and the wind was fair, I recommended the Captain to hoist every sail he could set, and thus we forced the ship through black mud till the Captain pronounced us in perfect safety. He then candidly informed me that he never expected to save the ship, but my good fortune prevailed on this occasion, and still more so in the sequel.

For nearly twelve months we had no intelligence whatever, but a letter from Canton soon afterwards conveyed to me the pleasing intelligence that Captain Thomas had made a successful voyage, and that the concern was

completely wound up by his disposing of the "Augusta" to the Portuguese at ship-building a fair price. And thus closed my shipping speculations.

I find I have still one aquatic adventure more to mention, in which a friend happened to have a concern. There chanced, at the close of the shipping concern, to be an overgrown lime-boat, or lighter, lying in the Sylhet river. A certain Captain Taylor, evidently not a little mad, had long petitioned me for employment without effect. At last, he urged me to put a deck on the lime-boat, and proposed to run her down before the wind to Madras. This I agreed to, upon the condition that the vessel, on her arrival, should be sold as fire-wood. Captain Taylor made out his voyage most successfully, but, instead of breaking her up, as proposed, he changed the name of the "Golumpus" to "Prince William," bestowed abundance of yellow ochre on her sides, and advertised her in the public papers, "For Bengal direct; for freight and passage apply to Captain Taylor." My friend, John Carstairs, had just arrived from England, and, reading the advertisement, the only question he asked was "Who is your owner?" Taylor answered, "The Hon'ble Robert Lindsay;" and Carstairs embarked next day with a fair wind.

It blew a gentle breeze, not more than three knots, when the ship broached to. All was soon put to rights, but, this having occurred again more than once.—"What is the meaning of this, Captain Taylor?" asked my friend. The Captain coolly replied, "How can it be otherwise, Sir? the vessel has no keel, Sir! her bottom is as flat as a panacake, and she is no better than a dung-barge!" Carstairs, after studying the features of the man, remained silent, trusting to Providence for the result. Most fortunately the weather continued fine and the wind favourable, the smallest reverse would have sent them all to the bottom.

I must conclude the history of my ships by quoting a paragraph from one of the last letters I received from my mother in Bengal:—"I understand, my dear Robert, that you are a great ship-builder—your talents in this line I do not dispute—but I have one favour to ask of you, which is, that you will not come home in one of your own building,"—and I implicitly followed her advice.

No. 196.

TO JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue,
FORT WILLIAM.

SYLHET :

April 1st 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

I take the liberty of laying before you a copy of a letter I addressed Cowries to the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council a few days ago. If the plan therein I proposed for the disposal of the Sylhet cowries meets your approbation, I beg leave to request you will recommend the same to the Hon'ble Board.

Ship-building. As the building and fitting out of large vessels from this part of the country was never attempted before, I hope the undertaking will meet your patronage and protection¹.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 197.

[Received 29th April.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,

Council Chamber.

11th April 1783.

Rice contract. SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform you that the Hon'ble Governor-General and Council have agreed to accept your proposal for contracting to deliver 15,000 bags of good cargo rice at Fort George, for which they are willing to allow you after the rate 6 sicca rupees and twelve annas *per* bag, being the same that they have agreed to pay Mr. John Fergusson for a supply of 1,40,000 bags. The Company's Attourney has been orderd to prepare deeds accordingly.

I am, etc.,
J. P. AURIOL,
Secretary.

No. 198.

[Received 28th April.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY, Esq.,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

The 14th April 1783.

SIR,

We send for your information an extract of a letter from the Hon'ble Board under date the 8th instant.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE.
SAMUEL CHARTERS.

Ed.
G. E.
Assistant.

¹ From the passage quoted from *Analysis of the Finances of Bengal* in the Introduction it will have been observed that Sylhet had supplied the Dacca fleet with wood for its ships.

Paragraph the 9th of the Hon'ble Board's letter to the Committee the 8th April 1783.

On the balances stated by Mr. Lindsay to be due from Sylhet, it appears to us that the pleas which he assigns are mere words, and you will communicate to him that this is clearly our idea on the subject, and that we accordingly expect that he will find means speedily to realize the whole.

A true copy,

W. HAVERKAM.

Secretary, Committee Revenue.

No. 199.

[Received 6th June.]

TO THE HONORABLE ROBERT LINDSAY.

Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

17th April 1783.

SIR,

Enclosed we send you copy of a petition presented by Constantine Parthenio on the part of the Greek inhabitants of Bengal. Greek grievance.

We direct that you take effectual measures to remove the grievances complained of by them, by allowing them the same opportunity of trading and following their occupations in the Sylhet provinces as they have heretofore enjoyed without molestation.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

C. CROFTES.

Enclosure. *

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, *

Governor General of Bengal.

Being deputed by the Patriarch of Constantinople for the several members of the Greek Apostolic Church in Asia, and having experienced most signal benefits and protection during the seven years I resided in Bengal from every member of Government, but in most especial manner from your Honor, by whose private munificence and bounty alone I was been enabled to erect a new Church in Calcutta for the assembly of the Greek Congregation. (I)

Encourage me by these favours, which I cherish with the deepest reverence and thankfulness, to trouble your Honor with great submission by representing a certain grievance which many of the Greeks have lately laboured under, to the great molestation of their private concerns.

¹ The foundations of the Greek Church in Calcutta, dedicated to the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor, were laid in June, 1780, and the building was consecrated on 6th August 1781. Warren Hastings headed the subscription list with a donation of Rs. 2,000. *vide Thacker's Guide to Calcutta.*

The matter of complaint is this ;—Since the Hon'ble Mr. Lindsay has occupied the station of Chief Resident at Sylhet, the Greek merchants in that district have been prohibited from following their occupations as formerly, particularly in manufactory of chunam, an indulgence they have been permitted to enjoy for a long series of years without molestation from any former chiefs. The Greeks have endeavoured to deport themselves with the utmost quietness as the best means of evincing their gratitude to Government of whose protection they cannot be but extremely sensible.

The number of Greeks dispersed in the several Provinces of India, does not exceed fifty or fifty-five ; they are plain industrious inoffensive people who have no other means of maintenance, and of contributing to the indispensable support of their Church, but by their industry in such humble means of merchandize as their several capacities and situations admit.

My duty to the Congregation, which by Divine favours I am appointed to succor and protect, induces me most humbly to submit these representations to your liberal and human consideration, accompanied by abundant apologies for intruding on the present occasion on your numerous and more important regards.

My constant prayers and benedictions, and the united orasions of all the Greek Congregation are daily offered that the Divine Being may keep you in his

Exd.

H. C.

Assistant.

No. 199.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Council of Revenue.

SYLHET :

29th April 1783

GENTLEMEN,

Accompanying I have the pleasure to enclose you—

Accounts.

General Treasury Account.

Charges Collections.

Charges Zemindary.

Charges General and Jumma Wassil Baukee of the Sylhet Province for the Bengal year 1189.

The particulars of the last account will be forwarded by the next dawk. The balance outstanding, you will perceive, amounts to cawns 58,352, 14, and I am sorry to say it has been totally out of my power to received it notwithstanding the unremitted attention I have paid to the interest of my Hon'ble Employers during the course of this year.

It grieves me to inform you that almost one-third of the inhabitants bordering upon the Jointah and Chutchar' countries have deserted their lands in consequence of the exorbitant demands of the zemindars, for, notwithstanding the express injunctions of the Board to the Company, the increase continues to be levied from the cultivators of the lands, nor have I found it in my power to prevent it. The zemindars and petty landholders of different denominations being so numerous a body and situated in remote stations, I hope you will excuse the request I now make, viz., that you will grant a deduction in the ensuing settlement of 50 to 60,000 *cawns* of cowries, a sum, in itself but small, yet it will induce many to return who of late have deserted their habitations. Had the increase upon the Sylhet district been levied in like proportion as that at Dacca or any other province in Bengal, I would not have ventured to make this requisition, but it being more than double what is settled from the neighbouring zemindars, I have found it a continual source of complaint upon every occasion—the more as, during the years 1777 and 1778, when every district in Bengal was granted remissions and deductions of revenue, Sylhet never experienced the smallest indulgence.

Deductions asked for.

have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 200.

[Received 28th May.]

TO THE HONORABLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet,

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

FORT WILLIAM:

13th May 1783.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 17th February and 22nd of March last 17th February.

From the very favourable report which you have made of Meer Ibrahim's general conduct in the discharge of his duty of Darogha during the ten years that he has filled that station, and it being further necessary that Government should discourage all such violent commotions carried on under the cloak of religion and all such intolerant principles as have so lately been exhibited in Sylhet, the Governor-General will write to the Naib Nazim desiring him as a mark of the favourable light in which this Government must view the conduct of Meer Ibrahim in the instance of the late disturbances to restore him immediately to his office, unless the Naib Nazim shall have good cause of a nature different from the one suggested by you for recalling him.

The Darogha.

The necessary orders have been issued for furnishing you with two field-pieces for the protection of the settlement at Sylhet agreeable to your request.

22nd March.

In consideration of the disorderly state of your district, we invest you with temporary powers similar to those of the Magistrate at Sultanse for the purpose of apprehending all such persons who may offend against the peace of the country under your jurisdiction, but you are afterwards to deliver them over to the Fouzedarry Court at Sultanse for trial.

We are, etc.,¹

WARREN HASTINGS.

EDW. WHEELER.

JOHN MCPHERSON.

No. 201.

[Received June 3rd.]

THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA:

19th May 1783.

SIR,

ash required
at Presiden-
cy.

The exigencies of Government requiring an immediate supply of cash at the Presidency, you are hereby directed to make an immediate remittance of the balance of cash in your hands, reserving a sufficiency to pay the troops at your station, or drafts of the committee in course of payment; and we further direct that you suspend till further order all payments that come under the heads of Charges Collections, Charges Zemidary, and Charges General, and that you do monthly remit to us whatever balance may remain at the end of the month, after reserving, as before mentioned, a sufficiency for the payment of the troops and drafts of the Committee in course of payment.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

C. CROFTES.

Exd.

W. H.

Secretary.

No. 201.

[Received 2nd June.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA:

The 19th May 1783.

SIR,

Accounts.

We have received your letter of the 29th April, with the several accounts mentioned to be enclosed.

Original signatures.

We cannot but remark that notwithstanding the general and repeated orders for giving a particular explanation of the balances, you have sent us ^{Deduction refused till further report.} only a general Account Jumma Wassil Bahey, without any particulars or explanation thereof. This omission precludes us from forming any opinion on the causes of the balance. We observe you promise to transmit a particular Jumma Wassil Bahey for the year 1189, but it has not yet reached us.

We are sorry also to remark that you state a necessity for allowing a remission on the Jumma of the present year, an account the desertion of the inhabitants bordering on the Junta and Cutchar countries, in consequence of the exorbitant demands of the zemindars. Notwithstanding the difficulty that may arise from the numbers and remote situation of the difficult landholders in enforcing the express injunctions of the Board, for preventing the levying an increase from the ryots, we are still of opinion, that by a regular attention to complaints preferred, and by making severe examples of offenders, these exactions may be diminished and effectually prevented in time. We therefore direct your particular attention to this point, and that you first ascertain these complaints that have given cause to the desertions, which are made the foundation of a request for a remission, and adopt every mode in your power to prevail on the ryots to return to their habitations.

We cannot, on the grounds stated by you, consent to the remission proposed. If, upon a particular and minute enquiry, it should appear necessary to grant relief to the ryots of any particular pergunnahs we can only admit it, when we are furnished with a particular account of the reasons in which this necessity is founded. You will accordingly take the necessary measures for making this enquiry, and report it to us.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

SAMUEL. CHARTERS.

C. CROFTES.

Exd.

A. S.

No. 202.

TO WILLIAM WEBBER, ESQ.,

SYLHET :

29th May 1783.

SIR,

Herewith I take the liberty of transmitting you a petition from the inhabitants of Sylhet Province respecting the removal of the Courts of Judicature, which I request you will take an opportunity of laying before the Hon'ble Board as soon as convenient. ^{Removal of Courts of Justice.}

I have, etc.,

B. LINDSAY.

No. 203.

[Received 3rd June.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

KHALSA :

The 21st May 1783.

SIR,

Complaints
against Lind-
say.

Having had referred to me for enquiry a petition, purporting to be presented on the part of a great number of the landholders of Sylhet complaining on various grounds of your management and soliciting thereon your recall; I think it regular, before I proceed to make any examination into the merits of the different articles of complaint, to furnish you with the enclosed copies of the petition and the power of attorney exhibited by those persons who have here delivered the petition; that you may favour me with such information thereon as you may think proper.

I am, etc.,
JOHN DUNCAN,
P. R. R. D.

No. 204.

[No date, apparently March 1784.]

TO EDWARD WHEELER, Esq.

SYLHET :

Sir,

Greek mer-
chants.

I am this day honoured with your letter of the 18th instant wrote in the polite terms, though it is in consequence of a complaint preferred to you by Mr. Parthenio in behalf of the Greek merchants trading to this district. Letter from the Committee of Revenue with their orders on the subject have reached me by the same conveyance. In stating his grievances I am sorry that Mr. Parthenio has no more regard to veracity in the present instance than in the former complaints already preferred against me. He himself is the only person interested, although to make his complaint appear with a greater degree of weight, he sets forth that the whole Greek community is aggrieved, and that the Church itself has sustained considerable losses in consequence of my distressing the trade. That he has lately met with obstructions, I allow, is the case; but he ought to have mentioned to you, Sir, from what quarter they actually came. For upwards of eight months past I have been in a constant state of warfare with the Casteahs or inhabitants of the mountains from whence the stones are drawn. I have myself sustained very considerable loss. All my own Chunam works were burnt to the ground, and many of my servants cut to pieces: and these incursions upon the low lands was likely to be attended with serious consequences had it not been for the active part I took myself in opposing them in person. The original of the same complaint now transmitted me was some time ago preferred to the Governor General, who demanded of me an immediate answer, copy of which I now enclose. I hope it

Lindsay's
chunam
works des-
troyed.

will meet with your approbation. You are not unacquainted, Sir, with the extreme poverty of the district I superintend, where shells is the only currency. It is from my industry alone that I can ever acquire a competency in this place. The chief and indeed the only advantage —

[Page torn out of volume.]

No. 205.

[Received 16th June].

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :
2nd June 1783.

SIR,

We desire to know if any and what objections occur against the proposals enclosed.

We are etc.,
J. SHORE.
SAMUEL CHARTERS.

Exd.

C. O.,
Assistant.

CALCUTTA :
The 29th May 1783.

TO JOHN SHORE, ESQ.,
Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

GENTLEMEN,

As I understand that there is a quantity of cowries at Dacca belonging to the Hon'ble Company, I beg leave to offer to buy the whole of it, together with all farther remittances of cowries from Sylhet to that place that may or shall be made in the course of 3 years hence, at the rate of 5 Cowns, and 12 Puns per Sicca Rupee, which comes to near 24 per cent. more than the Company's selling price at Dacca, but if you will be pleased to save me the duties or Government customs thereon, in that case I offer to take them at the rate of 5 Cowns and 9 Puns per Sicca Rupee, which reduces the said 24 per cent. to about 19½. The money to be paid into the Khalsa in different payments as I collect from its sales, but the whole to be completed in 6 months from the last day of the respective deliveries thereof to my Agent at Dacca.

By the above proposal it may perhaps appear to you, Gentlemen, that the Hon'ble Company suffers a loss of either 19½ or near 24 per cent., but you will certainly find upon calculation, that this loss, if not more, is inevitable. For supposing the cowries that are now lying at Dacca takes up 3 years in

selling (even this is a matter of doubt at the rate it has been done hitherto) is not 3 years interest, together with the Company's being so long kept from the use of the money greater loss.

Should you be pleased to deem this my proposal a reasonable one, as I must be at the expence and risk of transporting it to different markets and allow commission to my Agent for the disposing it, I hope you will grant me a contract for the same, to take place as soon as you may judge convenient. And that there may be no unnecessary delay in the delivery of the cowries to my Agent at Dacca, I would beg leave to propose that orders be given to the Chief of Dacca for certain number of cawns being first counted out, and baged, and that the rest be weighed off by the said Bag, making an allowance for the broken cowries, which is to be settled by the Chief and my Agent at Dacca.

I am, etc.,

MICHAEL DEROZIO.

End.

C. O.

Assistant.

No. 205A.

Extract from the Lives of the Lindsays, Volume III.

Lindsay's deal
in cowries.

Mr. Croftes, the Accountant-General, wished to provide for a favourite black writer, who worked in his office; this man was a shrewd intelligent fellow, and it occurred to him that a considerable profit might be made from the cowries under good management, provided a favourable contract could be made with Government. Mr. Croftes therefore delivered in to the Supreme Board, on behalf of his friend, an offer to purchase the whole of the cowries collected at Sylhet in the shape of revenue, at a certain given price, the money payable two years after delivery. A copy of this offer was sent me up officially by the Secretary, desiring my opinion whether the offer was adequate, or the reverse.

I now felt myself under a considerable dilemma, as I saw I was on the point of becoming a cipher, dependent on a black man; for it was evident that the person holding this contract would have an unbounded influence in the country from the whole revenues centering in his hands. It became also a matter of the utmost delicacy my attempting to give in a counter proposal in my own name, more especially as the contract had never been publicly advertised; but, as the future value of my situation depended on the result, I determined upon making a fair attempt to turn Mr. Lopez¹ to good account. With this view, I told the Board, in my answer, that, having compared the offer made by Mr. Lopez with the actual sales made at Dacca for the last five years, I could not help reporting the price offered not unfavourable; at the same time, I considered it my duty to say that the proposed term of payment, suspended for two years, was quite unreasonable, and I concluded by saying, that if the Board were satisfied with the price, and saw no impropriety

¹ From the records it will be seen the name was Derozio.

in my holding the contract for five years, I would tender them payment in six months after the delivery. The Accountant-General had previously recommended the offer made by Mr. Lopez so strenuously, that my offer could not with propriety be refused, and the contract of course fell to me. My friend the Accountant-General never forgave me for having thus outwitted him in the transaction, and he carefully awaited the conclusion of the contract, when, to prevent my interfering with his views a second time, the contract was advertised to be made by public sale at Calcutta at a distant day. But Mr. Lopez met with a second disappointment—a black man was also in attendance—to him the contract was knocked down.¹

I now had to address the Board once more on the same subject, informing them that the native contractor was my own servant, but that, if any objection was found to my holding the contract a second time, I would most cheerfully resign it; in reply, I was informed by the Secretary that they had no objection to me whatever. From this signal piece of good luck, and from the conspicuous advantage I derived from the great command of money to carry on my commercial pursuits, I have to date the origin of the fortune I acquired in the Company's service.

No. 206.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET :

9th June 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

I am duly favoured with your letter of the 19th of May, and am sorry Revenue. to find that the small deduction I proposed does not meet your approbation. The balance, of last year, as per the Jumma Wasil Bakee transmitted you, amounts to 58,000 *cauns* but it is not in my power, without fabricating an excuse for the zemindars, to assign any other reason for their not [having] liquidated the full amount of their *tahuts*² than inability to pay more than they actually have done. When the accounts are examined, it will appear that 25 *per cent.* has been collected from the province more than ever was done before during the same period. In the course of this year, many of the zemindars, to prevent their *pergunnahs* being sold to discharge the large balance due to Government, petitioned of me to take the management of lands into my own hands, which I have done in many instances, and find that several of their *pergunnahs* barely yield a profit of ten to fifteen *per cent.*—a sum by no means adequate to the charges of collection, interest of money, and expenses, without making any allowances for the maintenance of the numerous proprietors, but this is evidently owing to the bad management of the zemindars which has obliged many of the ryotts to abandon the district.

Had I full power and authority from the Government to collect the rents immediately from the talookdars and ryotts, without allowing the

¹ The records do not bear this part of the story out. It should be observed that Croftes was *Accountant General* to the Revenue Department, and William Larkins was *Accountant General* in the Public Department.

² *Tahut, Bengali, stipulated rents.*

zemindars to interfere, I am fully of opinion that in the course of two years the province could still yield an increase of 30 *per cent.* upon the present Jumma, with an additional drawback upon the lands of 20 *per cent.* for the maintenance of the proprietors.

This would no doubt [be] a most unpopular measure and occasion a very great clamor against the proposer, but it would soon be of the utmost benefit to the country, by obliging several thousands of indolent people to attend to cultivation of the lands or to follow some other occupation, to gain a livelihood, who think themselves at present of too great a consequence to consider to manual labour.

I am, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 207.

[Received 30th June].

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA :
The 16th June 1783.

SIR,

Direct collec-
tions from
ryots approv-
ed of.

I HAVE received your letter of the 9th. The confidence we repose in your management has been a principle motive for our assenting to the experiment you have proposed of collecting the rents immediately from the talukdars and ryots without the interference of the zemindars. We trust you will act with great caution in introducing a system which naturally may be very unpopular and may be opposed by the zemindars. We desire that in all instances where the zemindars have conducted themselves properly and have paid their rents with regularity, you will continue them in charge of their lands and apply the mode of collecting from the talukdars and ryots to such districts only which have fallen in arrears from the misconduct of the zemindars or where they have forfeited their pretension to the management of their lands from the oppressions they have exercised. You are the best judge in what instances this exception ought to apply and we have only in general to recommend to you, the greatest caution and discretion, in this business, upon which you will commence as soon as the collections of the current Sylhet year are closed and when you have concluded the settlement, you will transmit us account of it together with the fullest information on the subject.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE,
SAMUEL CHARTERS.

No. 208.

TO JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET:

20th June 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

I am favoured with your letter of the 2nd instant, enclosing Mr. De Rozario's proposal respecting the purchase of all the cowries now at Dacca together with all further remittances of cowries from Sylhet during the course of three years. Hitherto, notwithstanding the unusual low price of cowries, I have not sold any for less than 4.14 per Sa. Rupee, but at this rate they go off but slow, and, was it not for the great quantities I purchase myself, the market price would be much lower; but, what with the expense of godown hire, servant wages, and other contingent charges, the Honorable Company do not realise more than one Sa. Rupee for each five cawns and two puns. I am, therefore, of opinion that Mr. De Rozario could not have proposed more favourable terms with an expectation of deriving any benefit from the concern.

The only objection that can be made is to the tedious mode of payment, viz., six months after the delivery of the cowries. To obviate delays of this nature, and enable you to form an estimate of the receipts from the Sylhet Province realised in specie of the Presidency with accuracy, I beg leave to offer the same terms as proposed by Mr. De Rozario, with this difference only that I will engage to pay the nett revenues of Sylhet in to the Khalsa treasury at three stipulated annual payments, and to take the whole of the cowries now at Dacca at the same rate as mentioned in Mr. De Rozario's letter.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 209.

[Received 6th July.]

KHALSA

The 23rd of June 1783.

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,

Collector of Sylhet.

SIR,

Having laid your letter in answer to the petition of Raja Ram, etc. before the Committee, I have now the pleasure of transmitting to you enclosed a copy of their orders thereon in conformity to which I shall proceed in the examination and beg to know whether you choose to have any person present on your part whilst it is making.

I am, etc.,

JOHN DUNCAN,

P. B. R. D.

Extract from the Proceedings of the Committee of Revenue, dated the 19th of June 1783.

The Committee remark that they have had frequent opportunity of seeing the assertions stated in Mr. Lindsay's letters to the Preparer of Reports verified, and the Acting President perfectly well recollects the circumstance pointed out by Mr. Lindsay but has no recollection that the complainant thought proper afterwards to prosecute his complaint. The Committee are of opinion that in justice to Mr. Lindsay's character, the present complainants should be called upon to give responsible security for their appearance in order to prove the different articles laid to his charge. That for that purpose they be called upon individually and a list of their persons and inhabitants taking in writing. That in case they should not be able to give security they be put under a restraint to prevent their absconding. That in prosecuting this enquiry the Preparer of Reports do first require from the complainants proofs that they are authorised to appear on the part of other Talookdars at Sylhet. That in case they should not be able to produce such proofs, that no complaints be attended to but what particularly relate to themselves. That the Preparer of Reports do then proceed to enter into a particular enquiry of the several parts of the complaints as far as they regard the individuals by whom they are preferred or such other talookdars as have authorised the complainants to appear on their parts.

The Committee think it necessary further to remark that as the complaints at present stand they deem Mr. Lindsay's answer a full refutation of them, that their public duty nevertheless requires them to ascertain whether the complainants have or have not any just cause for the complaints they have preferred with repeated importunities for a number of years past, and to grant the talookdars redress, should they in any instance appear to merit it; to do justice to Mr. Lindsay by punishing the authors and promoters of groundless complaints tending to prejudice his character and embarrass the public service, and that a copy of the above opinions and resolutions be sent to Mr. Duncan for his information and guidance.

A true copy,
J. ELIOT,
Assistant to Prepr. of Reps.

No. 210.
[Received 3rd July.]

KHALSA:
June 24th 1783.

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY, Esq.,
Collector of Sylhet.

SIR,

I request you will peruse the accompanying extract of my proceeding for this date, and let me have your answer thereon as speedily as possible. You will observe that I have endeavoured to trace and prove the fabrication of the dahalutnama, in the manner you have pointed out, but without success as Raja Ram pretends that the names of the 3 surviving Canongoes were affixed by their Gomastahs whose names he specifies.

I communicated to you yesterday the Committee's orders relative to the mode of conducting the enquiry.

And am, etc.,
JOHN DUNCAN,
P. R. R. D.

ENCLOSURE.

Extract from the Proceedings of the Preparer of Reports of the 24th June 1783.

The Preparer of Reports, proceeding on the Committee's order of the 19th of June to ascertain the grounds of the Complaints of the Sylhet Petitioners against Mr. Lindsay, the Collector of that District.

Read again his letter of the 17th of June which has been already laid before the Committee.

Read the following Translation of the power of Attorney, exhibited by Rajah Ram Saine:

Translation of a power of Attorney exhibited by the Sylhet Complainants.

To Beejaram Saine, Rajaram Saine, Ram Kishen Chowdry and Mohun Ram.

We the whole Zemindars of the Mushroot, Khalsa and Jaguir Mahals of the Chulkla of Sylhet, do give in writing this Muchtyarnama or power of Attorney.

On account of the oppression of the former Aumils we have given you full power and appointed you on our part to proceed to Dacca and Calcutta with the Accounts of the Collections and attending at the Durbars of these places. You will present our Arzee or Petition to the Gentlemen and having procured the Dismission of the former Amila Mr. Lindsay, the Dewan Manick Chund, and the Mutsaddies Prem Narain and Gour Hory, whoever you shall get appointed for Farmer and Mutsuddie we approve of and hold valid. Wherefore we have given this Power of Attorney the 10th Bysaac 1189 or.....

Attestations by the
Canongoes.

Ragoonundun Roy
Royisho.

Srynsut Roy Rayi-
Sho.

Moshud Bushk
Jewan Kishen Roy.

Signatures.

1st Chowdries and Canongoes of the Pergunnah of Chowlis.

2nd All the zemindars of Pergunnah Bumbang.

3rd the Chowdries and Pcorcasties of Deenarpoor.

4th The Zemindars of Pergunnah Manderkundy.

In the hand writing of Barat
Ray Chowdry.

Ditto Durgaram
Chowdry.

Signed by Sobit Roy, Zemindar.

In the handwriting of Kalka
Pershand Chowdry.

Signatures continued.

5th The Chowdries of Pergunnah of Uchaly. In the hand writing of Hor
Bullab Chowdry.

6th	The Chowdries of Pergunnah Bumbaugh.	In the hand-writing of Ram Sunker Chowdry.
7th	Ditto and Poorka-ties of Shoestanagar.	Ditto of Kaly Sunker Chowdry.
8th	Ditto of Banooshatch ...	Ditto of Sham Roy Chowdry.
9th	Ditto of Pergunnah Bungseechoora.	Ditto of Mahomed Zemaun.
10th	Ditto of Pergunnah Agna	Ditto of Jadooram Chowdry.
11th	Ditto of Sautgaung ...	Ditto of Roop Ram Chowdry.
12th	The Zemindars of Attan Gurry ...	Ditto of Ram Sunker.
13th	Ditto of Buzoo Sumath ...	Ditto of Chand Ram Chowdry.
14th	Ditto of Pergunnah Koorsha.	Ditto of Jubnarain Poorkast.
15th	The Chowdries of Pergunna Jellalpoor.	Ditto of Roop Ram Naip of the Chowdries.
16th	Ditto of Muchtyarpoor ...	Benodee Ram Poorkast.
17th	Ditto of Luckypore ...	Jynarain Chowdry.
18th	Ditto of Hebubnagar (<i>sic</i>)	Gungnarain Chowdry.
19th	Ditto of Attuajaun ...	Ruttunbullub Chowdry.
20th	Ditto of Doolanly ...	Gulaub Ray Chowdry.
21st	Ditto and Canongoes of Alinagur.	Anunt Roy Chowdry.
22nd	Chowdries of Cowrea ...	Amver Mrah Chowdry.
23rd	Ditto of Shumshernagar	Sheeb Roy Canongoe.
24th	Ditto of Renga ...	Mhun Roy Poorkays.
25th	Zemindars and Canongoes of Eta	Mahomed Neevaz Poorkays.
26th	Chowdries of Lengla ...	Sham Ram Gomastah.
27th	Ditto of Kheeta ...	Fyze Mahomed Chowdry.
28th	Ditto of Lengla ...	Rogoonnaut Gomastah.

N.B.—The hand-writing or signatures ascribed to the different Chowdries and persons above recited are taken merely from the verbal information of Rajah Ram Seine.

Read the following translation of a Declaration from the Canongoes of Sylhet as transmitted in Mr. Lindsay's letter of the 17th of June:—

Translation of a Declaration from the Canongoes of Sylhet received from Mr. Lindsay.

Raja Ram Seine and Beejaram and Ram Kishen and Mohun Ran, Inhabitants of the Pergunnah of Chowalies, etc., having on account of various people's concerns fled from this, it is now ten or twelve years since, to get themselves a livelihood they are constantly dealing in calumny. We now hear that the said persons having lately exhibited a Power of Attorney as from us (which is in fact forged and fabricated) have preferred a petition of complaint against Mr. Robert Lindsay, the Collector and the Mutsuddies of this district, and have thereunto affixed themselves our signatures and those

of the zemindars of sundry Mahals. But we hereby declare that we have not given them any Power of Attorney, neither have we signed the Aizes; This Body of Calumniators are *heft Kulmees*, or can write after or imitate sundry different hands. As to the signatures of Roogoonundun Roy and Ram Roy Canongoes which are written on the Power of Attorney, it is seven or eight years since they died, and their sons Radha Kishen and Ramma Kant have now succeeded them: Whoever shall have thus forged and fabricated the Power of Attorney in question and taken upon themselves to write our signatures, the whole is entirely false, as may be easily ascertained by comparing our signatures that are on many papers sent heretofore to the Presidency with those on the Power in Question by which the fabricators will arrive at condign punishment; moreover, as to the three of the Vakeels, *viz.*, Beejeram, Ram Kishen, and Mohun Ram, to whom the said fabricated Power of Attorney is addressed, the said persons are here in the mofussil, nor is there any one of the four at Calcutta excepting only Raja Ram Saine, who stays there to excite disputes, but we have no concern in his wickedness.

Signed :—

Symee Sry Naut Rajisho

Sry Radha Kishno Rayisho.
Sry Jeewan Kishno Rayisho.

Raja Ram Seine being called the following question are put to him :—

QUESTION.—Of the four Vakeels, *viz.*, yourself and Beejeram, Mohun and Ram Kishen, to whom the Vakalutnama you have addressed is exhibited, you seem the only one attending; where are the three others?

ANSWER.—Mohun Ram died of the small-pox about two months ago at Chitpoor, Beejeram left a Vakeel here named Dwigaram, and is gone into the mofussil, where he has been for these three years, and Kishen Ram left this and went along with Gyaram into the mofussil when the latter became in 1188 the manager of the Collections of Sylhet.

QUESTION.—When did you procure the Vakalutnama, which you now exhibit?

ANSWER.—I brought it with me here when I arrived four years ago in the month of Bysaak.

QUESTION.—Why have the Canongoes attested your Power of Attorney?

ANSWER.—It is the custom of our country; but to authenticate the Deed and also as the Canongoes are themselves Landholders.

QUESTION.—Are the five Canongoes' signatures affixed to your Power of Attorney respectively signed by those persons or not?

ANSWER.—It is not necessary by the custom of our Chukklah for the principals always to sign themselves, since their gomastahs may do so for them. Thus, the signature of Rogoonundun Roy is affixed in his own handwriting, as is also that of Ram Roy, whilst the three others were signed as follows :—

The signature of Sry Naut by Golaub Roy.

'Ditto of Moshud Buksh by Sheeb Pershaud.

'Ditto of Jeewan Kishen by Ram Rutton.

QUESTION.—Are these last three Gomastahs all now alive?

ANSWER.—Yes.

QUESTION.—Is Rogoonundun Roy now alive or not?

ANSWER.—No, he is dead.

QUESTION.—When did he die?

ANSWER.—Since my leaving Sylhet with the Power of Attorney.

QUESTION.—Is Ram Roy Canongoe dead or alive?

ANSWER.—He was alive last year. I don't know whether he be now alive or dead.

QUESTION.—I am informed that both Rogoonundun and Ram Roy Canongoes have been dead these seven or eight years?

ANSWER.—Let this be ascertained by sending for their Relations, *viz.*, for Radha Kishen, the son of Rogoonundun, otherwise known by the name of Saheb Ram, and by calling in like manner on Soonder Ram, the brother of Ram Roy.

QUESTION.—Do you know the name of Ram Roy's son?

ANSWER.—No.

QUESTION.—Will you enter into a Mochulka to prove that Mohun Bam is now alive in the mofussil?

ANSWER.—Yes, undoubtedly: but there may be many more Mohun Rams in the mofussil.

A true copy,

J. ELIOT,

Assistant to the Preparer of Reports.

No. 211.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET:

25th June 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

Cowries.

I this day received a bill of exchange drawn by you in my favour upon the Chief of Dacca for Sa Rs. 1,01,250 to be paid in cowries as far as the amount of cowries in his possession will admit.

You will please to observe that the Sylhet cowries are not remitted to Mr. Holland as formerly. He, therefore, cannot discharge the amount of the bill otherwise than in rupees, which, I flatter myself, he will not demur in doing. This will be attended with no disadvantage whatever to the Honorable Company, for if the bill is paid, I will immediately render

you an account of whatever balance of cowries remaining unsold does not amount to near the sum specified in the bill. I, therefore, beg that he may have directions to pay the amount in specie.

I have, etc ,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 212.

TO WILLIAM JACKSON, Esq.,
Registrar to the Supreme Court of Judicature

SYLHET :
30th June 1783.

SIR,

Herewith I have the pleasure to transmit you the affidavit of Derick ^{The late Wm.} Smith, one of the Executors to the state of the late Mr. William Driver, as Driver sworn before me this day, in consequence of a commission of this purpose addressed to me by the Hon'ble the Supreme Court of Judicature, which commission having duly executed, I now return.

I am, etc ,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 213.

[Received 12th July]

TO THE HON'BLE R LINDSAY, Esq.,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA

3rd July 1783.

SIR,

We have received your letters of the 25th and 28th June.

We have written to the Chief of Dacca to discharge the bill drawn upon him in your favour in rupees, in case he should not have cowries sufficient for that purpose, to discharge as much of the amount thereof in cowries, as the balance of them in his possession may admit, and the remainder of the bill in specie.

Having taken into consideration your proposal for the payment of the nett Revenues of Sylhet into the Khalsa Treasury, at three stipulated annual payments, and to take the whole of the cowries now at Dacca at the same rate as mentioned by Mr. D'Rozario, we agree to accept them, with a reserve of the cowries remaining in Mr. Holland's possession unsold, which are to be paid in part discharge of the bill drawn upon him in your favour as above specified.

I am, etc.,
J. SHORN.
SAMUEL CHARTERS.

No. 214.

To JOHN SHORN, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the
Committee of Revenue.SYLHET :
12th July 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

Strong measures
with
Sylhet Zemindars.

I am duly favoured with your letter of the 16th ulto, and consider myself highly honored with the confidence you repose in my management, which I shall ever endeavour to merit as far as lies in my power.

The Sylhet zemindars cannot be considered in any other light but as the immediate servants of the Government. Two thirds at least one half of the lands of each Pergunnah being] the property of a multiplicity of petty talookdars, from whom the rents are collected in the most arbitrary and oppressive manner. As an instance of this I [now enclose] an abstract of the collections made [upon] talooks situated in the Etah, Shemshurnagar, and Allynagur pergunnahs, the zemindars having collected in the same proportion from the other, which is near 300 per cent. more than is authorized by Government and far more than the produce of the lands when sold at market. I have, therefore, put it out of the power of the zemindars to commit further exactions by rendering these talooks huzoory.

As to making the talookdars of the whole Province huzoory or independent of the zemindars, it is by no means my intention. I only wish to put the zemindars upon their guard, but did not choose to make an example, without your immediate approbation, as it will, of course, increase the clamors against me tenfold, for it is a precedent which strikes immediately at the zemindar's profit, his consequence, and authority; but you will not, I flatter myself, on this account entertain any idea to the prejudice of my character, as the disposition of the plaintiffs is pretty well known all over Calcutta. From a thorough knowledge of this myself, I have carefully avoided innovations of every kind, the apparent tending to the benefit of the country, except that of establishing several valuable manufactures, which, I understand have proved the cause of great complaints.

Troublesome
character of
inhabitants.

Having in all my letters upon the same subject, exclaimed against the litigious and troublesome disposition of the inhabitants, I will not touch upon it again. Indeed I would have considered it far beneath my notice, but when continual clamours are heard against any individual servant of the Government, though not immediately credited, yet it is often surmised that they are not totally without foundation. To remove impressions of this kind, I have troubled you perhaps oftener than there was any occasion.

Grievances.

As to the complaints against me, they are in great measures to be accounted for. The populace and poorer sort of people of this country consider the character of the Resident as immediately responsible for any misfortune that befalls the district or themselves individually. The very great increase of revenue is looked upon as entirely owing to my representations, and has operated much to my prejudice. In their opinion the removal of the Court of Judicature still more so; as there is a total anarchy and confusion throughout the Province which is also laid to my charge. It is, therefore, my opinion that I am now highly disliked

by the natives in general, and that, independent of any other cause of complaints, they would willingly unite their endeavours to effect my removal, in hopes that my successor would be more fortunate than me in removing the grievance they now labour under.

I have etc.,
ROB. LINDSAY.

No. 215.

[Received 7th August.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

24th July 1783.

SIR,

The information, transmitted as in consequence of the orders of the Hon'ble Board communicated to you under, dated the 17th March last being unsatisfactory, we think it necessary to direct that you procure an exact account of every European not being a servant of the Company residing in the districts under your charge, calling upon them to produce their licenses, and transmit the account to us without loss of time.

*Lists of
European
residents
required.*

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE.
SAMUEL CHARTERS.

No. 216.

TO JOHN MACINTYRE, Esq.,
Secretary, Board Ordnance, Fort William.

SYLHET :

6th August 1783.

SIR,

I was duly favored with your letter of the 20th June, acquainting me that the Hon'ble Board has been pleased to order 3 pounder field guns with their carriages and appertinances complete to be sent to me, also a small proportion of ammunition. As they are not yet arrived at this place, I beg leave to know by what conveyance they are sent up.

Ordnance.

I have etc.,
ROB. LINDSAY.

No. 217.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee
of Revenue.

SYLHET :

25th August 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

Absconding
Zemindars.

The zemindars of Dawadee, a pergunnah of 6,500 cawns Jumma, having absented themselves for nine months without paying a single cowrie of revenue during that period, notwithstanding my repeated publications threatening the sale of their lands, I am now under the necessity of soliciting your permission to put the same in execution.

I have, etc.,

ROB. LINDSAY.

No. 218.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee
of Revenue.

SYLHET :

9th September 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

Alleged griev-
ances of
Greek mer-
chant.

I duly received your letter of the 17th April, enclosing a copy of a complaint preferred against me by the Rev. Mr. Parthenio¹ setting forth that since my residence at Sylhet, the Greek merchants have been prohibited from their occupation as formerly, particularly in the article of manufacturing chunam.

A complaint of this nature preferred by a man of his cloth surprises me much, for during the six years I have resided in these parts the few Greeks who have appeared here, and who are but itinerant traders and people of the lowest class, have never received the smallest interruption from me, nor have they, till the present period, ever indicated the smallest inclination to manufacturing chunam as represented by the Reverend Parthenio, perhaps owing to the low price the article has been for some years past at Calcutta. The representation of Mr. Parthenio, I can, if called upon, confute from his letters now in my possession, but the complaints did not originate with when it was drawn up and fabricated by a Mr. Govin Hamilton of Calcutta, who has entered into a joint concern in commerce with the Reverend Father and others of the same persuasion; and they both, having an inclination to speculate largely in the chunam branch, took this mode of insuring to themselves a large share of the trade by obliging me to give up many of the workmen now employed by me in this business. Had there been cause of complaint, the few natives of great daintiness (*sic*) who gain their livelihood by this commerce would not have been sitting (*sic*).² It is well known too much refer me to deny it that I deal

¹ This is the Greek priest who is supposed to have sat to Zoffany as the model for the Christ in the altar piece at St. John's Church, Calcutta.

² So in the Ms.

largely in this commodity myself. My salary and few emoluments annexed to my station I receive entirely in cowries, for there is not a rupee in the province, and, was it not for this traffic, I would not possess wherewith to purchase the necessaries of life in other parts of the country.

The cast of people who manufacture chunam under the mountains are but those chiefly employed by the original traders. The agent of the Rev. Father will, therefore, find many difficulties in establishing extensive works, which will, of course, be charged to my account. In my own justification I, therefore, trouble you with the foregoing state of the case. I was in great hopes of accommodating the matter with Mr. Parthenio, without your being further troubled on the occasion, but he and his partners are too unreasonable, and nothing will consent them but my resigning the business in their favour.

I have, etc.,
ROB. LINDSAY.

No. 219.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee
of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET:

10th September 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

I am duly favoured with your letter of the 25th *ulto.* and, agreeable to your orders, shall prepare and transmit you the accounts therein specified with all possible expedition. As my private business calls me to Calcutta, I request your permission to repair hither during the course of next month, when I will take the opportunity of adjusting my account with those of the Khalsah, if not rectified before that period. Leave asked for.

This difference of 1,201 rupees between the Account Settlement of 1188 Revenue. and 1189 was owing to a deficiency of Revenue in several of the Pergunnahs, which were not increased in a like proportion upon the others. Had I thought this small alteration would have occasioned any confusion in the Revenue Books, it would not have happened. The Kistbundee commencing from the month of Assin in the Bengal year 1189 and ending in the month of Bawdon 1190, is now preparing, but please to observe, if I am called upon for a Jumma Wasil Bankce during this period, there will appear an extraordinary, though only a nominal, deficiency in the collection, because in forming the Kistbundee for 1190, commencing in Bysack, the Kists which were before the harvest, during the months of May, June, and July, are now from necessity carried forward to the months of September, October and November, during which period in the former years, there was no collections whatever; for in that month in which the Puncnah is held, as well as the succeeding are, it is well known, there are little or no collections made in any part of the country. I am now under the necessity of representing to you that the closing of the collections now in the month of September as formerly would be productive of the utmost confusion, and a great balance would be outstanding at present. I have the

pleasure to inform you that the Revenues were as favourable an aspect as can be wished. Two thirds of the province having been given by the proprietors in farm to individuals who are far better able to conduct the business than the zemindars, who have reserved to themselves certain portions of lands for their maintenance. Before the expiration of the year, I hope there will be but a trifling balance uncollected.

I have, etc.,

ROB. LINDSAY.

No. 220.

TO JOHN SHORE, ESQ.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET,

12th September 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

Revenue.

Agreeable to the Orders contained in your letter of the 25th ultimo, I now transmit you Account Settlement and Kistbundee, beginning with the month of Assin 1189 and ending in Bawdon, but please to observe that this form of Kistbundee was abolished, and a new Kistbundee drawn out commencing from the month of Bysack. I am, therefore, under the necessity of representing to you that, if the former kistbundee is attended to, it will tend to create mistakes, as, from necessity, there are considerable alterations in the latter one respecting the season of collecting the heavy kist. The difference of Rupees 1,201 or cawns 4,804, appearing between the jumma of the Bengal year 1188 and that of 1189, I accounted for in my last letter. The rectifying this now will make all the accounts transmitted to you since that period appear erroneous but, if it is your desire that the jumma of both years shall exactly correspond, I will make the necessary alterations.

What difference may arise between my accounts and those of the Khalsa I cannot well account for, but it no doubt arises in the altering the form of the Kistbundee which took place conformably to your directions. In order that the annual accounts of the Sylhet [Province] might correspond in point of time with those of every other Province [in] Bengal, I was instructed to close the collections to the 1st of May 1782. I, therefore, immediately transmitted to the Committee, under that date, a Jumma Wasil Bankue for the preceeding 7 months and 20 days, viz., from the 1st of Assin 1188, duplicates of which I now enclose you. The letter which accompanied that account explained to you the cause of so large a balance, chiefly owing to the unexpected orders for terminating with the Bengal year, which the zemindar in a great measure took advantage of by withholding a great part of the last kist. If the said balance, 25,000 cawns has since been brought to credit, and 33,000 more increased under the talooks of the present year which will also be duly accounted for.

The above accounts are accompanied with copies in the Persian and Bengal languages. If they do not serve to clear up the difference between my accounts and those of the Khalsah, I will do the utmost in my power to rectify the mistake, upon my arrival at Calcutta.

I have, etc.,
ROBERT LINDSAY.

No. 221.

[Received the 6th October.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA :

22nd September 1793.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 9th instant. We do not mean to ~~esta-~~ Greek trader. blish any new privileges in favour of the Greeks residing in Sylhet, but that they enjoy with all other merchants a freedom in trade, while they carry it on in a manner to afford no cause of complaint to the inhabitants and conduct themselves inoffensively.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE.
SAMUEL CHARTERS.

No. 221.

[Received 3rd October.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA :

the 22nd September 1793. *

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 10th instant.

You have our permission to come to the Presidency, and we desire you will ~~Leave of ab-~~ bring with you all accounts and papers necessary for adjusting the accounts ~~sence.~~ of the Sylhet Province at the Khalsa, which we judge to be the most certain and expeditious mode of effecting it.

EDD.

G. E.

Asst.

We are, etc.,
SAMUEL CHARTERS.

Enclosure.

[Letter to J. Shore, Acting President and Committee, Revenue, from Governor General and Council in the Revenue Department, relative to advances to Officers Commanding detachments. *Vide* Circular Volume.]

No. 223.

[Received 9th October.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

KHALSA :

the 24th September 1783.

SIR,

Complaints
against Lind-
say.

Having made a report to the Committee on the subject of your last letter to me, I have now the pleasure of enclosing to you an extract of their orders thereon ; on which I beg the favour of hearing from you.

I am etc.,

JONH DUNCAN,
P. R. R. D.

Enclosure.

Extract from the Proceedings of the Committee of Revenue of the 22nd September 1783, on report from the Preparer of Reports relative to the complaints against Mr. Lindsay and his officers, etc.

The Committee are of opinion that the deed produced by Rajah Ram Sien as an authentic commission from the zamindars and chowduries of Sylhet authorising him to institute the complaints as specified in the petition recorded in the Committee's Proceedings bears strong marks of being fabricated by

not entitle Rajah Ram Sien, who is the only person named in the power of attorney now present, to appear on behalf of the zamindars of Sylhet or to undertake any matters relating to them.

The Committee are, therefore, of opinion that a particular inquiry should be made into this circumstance by the Preparers of Reports previous to admitting Raja Ram Sien as the representative of the zamindars, and that for this purpose Mr. Lindsay should be directed to send down to the Presidency Breenaut Rejesho to give testimony respecting his own signature, that of Radakishen and that Sry Jewan Kishen Rajesho, or in case of his inability to attend, any one of the persons here named, and that he do further send down two or three persons who can give testimony as to the time of the death of Roganundun and Ramray.

The Committee at the same time remark that by disavowing the documents exhibited by Raja Ram Sien, although, it gives rise to a further suspicion that the complaints preferred in the names of the zamindars and chowduries

are without foundation, they do not mean to exclude the zamindars and chowduries from preferring or prosecuting any complaints they may have to make personally or by Vakeels duly constituted.

That Mr. Duncan be directed to signify this to the complainants, and inform them that they must either attend personally or by Vakeels authorised in the clearest and fullest manner.

A true Extract.

W. M. HAVERKAM.

Secretary.

A true copy.

J. Eliot.

Assistant to the Preparer of Reports.

No. 224.

[Received 9th October.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA

25th September 1783.

SIR,

We have received your Towjee Account for the month of Sawon.

We direct that you do inform the proprietors of Doady and Betul that, ^{warning to} unless they terminate their disputes and pay the balance, which has arisen in proprietors of consequence of those disputes, their lands will be sold for the recovery of lands. Government demands, and that after your giving notice to the talookdars, and allowing them time, you do actually proceed to the sale in case they should not discharge their balances.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

Exd.

W. H.

Secret a ry.

No. 225.

[Received 10th November.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY.

CALCUTTA :

The 28th October 1783.

DEAR SIR,

The Governor General put into my hands this morning the accompanying petition from the Greek Priest residing in Calcutta in behalf of the traders of his Nation in Sylhet, and directed me to desire of you to acquaint me for his information in what state, whether of monopoly or freedom, the chunam trade now is in your district, and whether or not you have seized any belonging to the Greeks as set forth in the petition; and further to intimate to you his desire that, until he shall have decided on your answer, the Greek traders may in no respect be impeded in this or any other lawful branch of commerce.

Dear Sir, etc.,

JOHN DUNCAN.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.,
Governor General.

CALCUTTA :

22nd October 1783.

HON'BLE SIR,

It gives me great uneasiness to be so troublesome to you concerning the affairs of the poor Greek merchants in the Province of Sylhet, but, at the same time that I express my gratitude for the goodness in endeavouring to redress their grievances formerly represented by me. It is also proper that you be informed of your measures and orders decided for that purpose having not been attended with the desired success. I took the liberty in a former letter to mention to you that the Tannadar of Sylhet had (contrary to an express order of Mr. Lindsay's) prevented entirely the operation of the Greeks in the manufacture of chunam. Though there appeared then some reason to imagine that the Tannadar's disobedience was not disagreeable to the Collector, yet I did not think it proper for me to mention such a thing to you without more certain ground. However I must now beg pardon for suggesting that there is now every reason to suppose such was the case, for the Collector instead of reprehending the Tannadar, has himself not only openly hindered the operations of the Greeks, but has actually seized upon such materials as they had collected for their business, which will occasion a heavy loss to them, and as I conceive it was far from your intention in sending the first order to the Collector, that the poor Greeks should be sufferers, I request your goodness will not only excuse my presumption in giving so much trouble, but will likewise be exerted in forcing redress by requiring Mr. Lindsay to indemnify the sufferers in the value of the materials provided by them for the making of chunam, or in any other way that you may judge proper.

I have, etc.,

CONSTANTINO PARTHENIO.

No. 226.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue,

SYLHET :

November 2nd, 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

I have hitherto avoided troubling you upon the following subject, what ^{Trouble with the Khasis.} I am now under the necessity of doing, in case of the matter becoming more serious than at present. One of the Cossahs, an inhabitant of the mountains, having been treated with indignity by a Havildar of the sepoys, the affront was considered as an insult upon the community, and the petty Rajahs, though constantly at enmity with each other, united upon this occasion to claim redress. This they demanded of me, and I certainly would have given it upon the spot, had their expectations been confined within reasonable bounds; but nothing less than the Havildar's head would appease them, which, of course, could not be granted. In consequence of the refusal, they attacked the tannah of Panduah, a small khellah for the protection of the merchants which they repeatedly assaulted with considerable loss on both sides, but, not succeeding in carrying it, the place has been blockaded for near two months; and my whole Sebuddo corps is now employed in its defence. Nor is there a probability of the matter being soon accommodated, for they have shown a greater degree of courage and perseverance than I ever experienced before, and brought against me a number of fire arms, which they never had at any former period. I do not mean to trouble you for an additional force till necessity requires it, for there is impracticability of resenting the insult by acting against them upon the offensive, owing to the situation of that part of the country and their inaccessible places of abode. The only assistance I trouble you for at present is to request the Board of Ordnance to send me without delay for the defence of the khellah :—

100 stands of arms complete.

4 iron wall pieces 4-pounders.

6 barrels of powder with proportionable quantity of balls and grape ammunition.

This, with the arms I have now got, will, I hope, be sufficient. A small block-house with a ditch and mud wall put at Panduah would effectually prevent the like in future, and be a protection to the merchants, who carry on a very extensive trade to that place in copper. I shall take another opportunity of laying before you an estimate of the charge of building this work, which, I dare say, you will consider reasonable. ^{Fort required at Panduah.}

I have, etc.,

ROBERT LINDSAY.

No. 227.

To JOHN SHORE, Acting President,
and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET :

November 4th, 1788.

G NTLEMEN,

Rice crop.

In obedience to your commands of the 18th ultimo, I have the honour to inform you that the present crop of rice throughout the district, from the want of rain in the month of October, does not wear the same favourable prospect as in former years, but no means seems to threaten scarcity in the Province. On the contrary, a small quantity might be exported without distressing the inhabitants, and the merchants, of their own accord, while the [price] is reasonable, will continue to export it. At the same time, I think it duty incumbent on me to acquaint you that should any of the public officers attempt to purchase on account of Government, it will in some measure tend to occasion an artificial scarcity.

As to public granaries there are none throughout the district, the ryotts generally bringing to market just a sufficiency for daily consumption: nor does the Province produce such a quantity of rice as is generally supposed. From the most authentic information, I [have] been able to acquire, it does not appear that the annual exportation from hence, for some years past, has exceeded 80,000 maunds.

The Boora Fussill, or that crop that is planted in the very lowest lands in the month of December (which are constantly under water for 8 or 9 months) is by far the largest produced, and is of the coarsest sort of grain fit only for the immediate consumption of the poorer sort of the inhabitants, by whom it is chiefly used. You may depend on my most particular attention on every occasion to prevent any sudden or extraordinary advance of price for grain, and, agreeable to your orders, will send you weekly abstract as soon as ever any alteration takes place from the present price. Rice at present is sold from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ maund per Rupee. In regard to other grains, there are none produced in the district.

I have, etc.,
B. LINDSAY.

No. 228.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA :

The 10th November 1788.

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

SIR,

Revenue.

We have received your Towjee Account for the month of Bhadon, from which we perceive a balance of Rupees 11,400-0 or Cowries 45,600-0 to be

due from the districts of Sylhet of which a sum of 6,600-0-0 Rupees was daily expected to arrive at your Catchery.

If the Zemindars of Moondercoondy, etc., are under prosecution in Court of Adawlut and unable to attend to the business of their lands, we desire you will appoint a Sezawul to make the collections, and take such other measures as you may judge most eligible to preserve the revenue.

If the Zemindars of Beetal do not return to their duty we desire you will state to us the measures you deem best adopted to secure the revenue of that district.

With regard to the other balances, we confide in your exertions to realize them, as well as in effecting the regular payment of the future kists.

We are, etc.,

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

C. CROFTES,

J. EVELYN.

No. 229.

THOMAS GRAHAM, Esq.,

and Members of the Committee of Grain.

SYLHET :

11th November 1783.

GENTLEMEN,

I have this day received your letter of the 23rd ultimo. For your information I do myself pleasure to enclose you a copy of a letter I addressed to the Committee of Revenue some days ago, from which you learn exact state of the crops in the district under my charge. I shall on all occasions operate with [you], as far as lays in my power, to effect the object of your appointment.

Committee
of Grain.

I am, etc.

R. LINDSAY.

No. 230.

[Received 22nd November.]

COMMITTEE OF GRAIN,

FORT WILLIAM :

The 12th November 1783.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,
at Sylhet.

SIR,

The Board having found it expedient to prohibit the exportation even of the contract rice, and to enjoin the strictest embargo ; we enclose a copy of our advertisement in consequence, and request that you will use your utmost

Embargo on
Grain.

exertions to prevent any illicit exportation of grain by sea, and that you punctually inform us of the intended departure of all vessels from any places within your knowledge, as every attempt to infringe the embargo will be particularly attended to; the lives of the natives, being endangered in proportion to the quantity of grain exported.

We are, etc.,
 GEORGE CUMMING.
 THOMAS LAW.
 G. TEMPLER.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The Hon'ble the Governor General and Council in a late advertisement were pleased to authorize the free transportation of grain beyond the western boundaries of the Company's Dominions for the term of two months; having now thought proper to revoke that permission and to confine the free Commerce in that article to the limits of the Provinces of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, and to order a total Embargo upon all Exports of grain from thence either by sea or land, notice is hereby given to all merchants, traders and others, and to the Inhabitants of every denomination residing within the Company's Provinces, that all grain attempted to be exported in defiance of these orders and without proper authority from Government shall be seized and confiscated, and if found to belong to any officer or Agent of Government the said officer or Agent being clearly convicted thereof shall be liable to be publicly disgraced and dismissed from his office.

FORT WILLIAM;
The 30th October 1783.

By order of the Committee of Grain,
 FRANS. MURR.

No. 231.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
 CALCUTTA :
The 24th November 1783.

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
 Collector of Sylhet.

SIR,

Lindsay's
 explanation of
 balances ques-
 tioned.

The Hon'ble Board having passed some orders on the subject of your explanations of the Toujæ Balances for the month of Bhaddon, we transmit you an extract of their letter to us for your information and require your strict attention to the orders contained in it and that you will transmit to us your proceedings upon the several points as soon as possible.

We are, etc.,
 C. CROFTES.
 J. EVELYN.

Exd.—
 W. H.,
 Secretary.

Extracts of a letter from the Hon'ble Board, dated the 18th November 1783.

Paragraph 5th.—In the Collector of Sylhet's explanation of his Toujee Account, we observed that he ascribes some of the balances to certain of the landholders being confined at the Turuff of Sultanse Adawlut. We have therefore required of the Judge of that Court to report to us the names of all the landholders who may be so confined with the causes of their restraint. As Mr. Lindsay's notice of the subject is too concise and inexplicit to enable us to determine on the propriety of the proceedings of the Adawlut; which we desire you will remark to him and require his being more particular in future.

Paragraph 6th.—As Mr. Lindsay further mentions that arrears are due from some zemindars who have absconded, you will of course instruct him to advertise a day for the sale of their lands, should they not return to their duty within a reasonable time which he must limit for that purpose.

Paragraph 7th.—We cannot admit Mr. Lindsay's assertion that the balances from the Hill Rajahs are irrecoverable until he assigns his reasons why they are so, which you will therefore immediately call upon him for, and report them to us that we may finally determine on the subject.

Exd.

W. H.

Secretary.

No. 232.

[Received 5th January 1784.]

CALCUTTA

. The 18th December 1783.

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,

Collector of Sylhet.

SIR,

There appears a balance of Rupees 22,121-13 due from the districts under your charge on account the year 1188. I am directed by the Committee to request you will transmit to them an explanation thereof, together with your opinion whether they are recoverable or irrecoverable, and if the former, what measures will be most effectual to obtain the payment of them.

I am, etc.,

D. HAVERHAM,

Secretary.

No. 233.

[Received 9th January 1784.]

CALCUTTA :

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY, Esq.,

The 29th December 1783.

Collector of Sylhet.

SIR,

Military.

Being doubtful whether I ever sent you the under written paragraph of a letter from the Hon'ble Board, as the Committee directed, I take the liberty of sending it, and am.

I am, Sir, etc.,

W. HAVERKAM.

Secretary.

Paragraph of a letter from the Hon'ble Board under date the 19th December 1783.

We agree to the proposal of the Collector of Sylhet to raise a small corps of regular sepoys in lieu of burcondasses ; and have appointed Ensign William Troop to the temporary command thereof, agreeable to the Collector's request.

A true copy.

W. HAVERKAM, *

Secretary.

No. 234. *

TO JOHN SHORE, Esq., .

Acting President, and Members
of the Committee of Revenue,

Fort William.

SYLHET:

29th January 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

Private En-
ropeans order.
ed to the
Presidency.

Conformable to your orders of the 29th ultimo, I have ordered all Europeans resident here not being servants of the company to repair to the Presidency ; and hope soon to have the honour to inform you that they have actually left the place.

I have, etc.,

W. HYNDMAN.

No. 235.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,
Acting President, and Members
of the Committee of Revenue,
Fort William.

SYLHET:

1st March, 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

I am sorry to acquaint you that the hill people, having collected additional forces, have become more troublesome, and at the same time more formidable than ever. My whole sebundee corps has been employed in the defence of the Ponduah tannah for upwards of five months without the possibility of their acting from the situation of the country offensively. Of late we have had no intelligence from thence, as the hill people have taken possession of all the neighbouring jungles and passes leading to that place, and cut off the supplies of provision. Hill people cause trouble.

As soon as I collect a sufficient force for this purpose, I will endeavour to open a communication; and, as it is absolutely necessary to keep that port for the protection of the whole province, I mean to carry up a number of workmen with a view of erecting a place of strength which can be defended by a few men.

The expense already incurred, exclusive of the establishment for the escort of provisions, ammunition, an additional number of burgundasses, etc., has been considerable, the particulars of which I will take the liberty of submitting to your consideration in a future letter.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 236.

[Received 22nd March 1784.]

To THE HON'BLE R. LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA:
4th March 1784.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 2nd ultimo, enclosing your Towjee Account for the month of Poos. From the remarks of the Acting Collector we consider the balances due from Bannyachang and from Lungleh to have been collected. We desire you will enforce the payment of the balances due from pergunnah Mourapur, and particularly exert yourself in realising the remaining kist of the year. Accounts.

We are, etc.,
S. CHARTERS.
JOHN EVELYN.

No. 237.

To JOHN SHORE, Esq.,
Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue,
Fort William.

SYLHET :

25th March 1794.

GENTLEMEN,

Allowances.

I beg to be informed what allowances are to be paid to Mr. Davidson, Assistant Surgeon, and Ensign William Troop, lately appointed to this establishment. If you do not think proper to give this officer more than his established pay and batta, I beg you will make him an extra allowance of one hundred rupees per month as Tannadar of Panduah; as he incurs a considerable expense in travelling to and from that place.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 238.

[Received 27th March 1784.]

To THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY, Esq.,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
(CALCUTTA :
18th March 1784.

SIR,

Greek mer-
chants,

Enclosed we send you copy of a petition, which has been sent to us by the Hon'ble Board with directions that the Greeks have the liberty of a free and uninterrupted trade in Sylhet, and that you will procure them an indemnification of real losses they have sustained, and in future you protect them from any interruptions.

We are, etc.,
S. CHARTERS.
JOHN EVELYN.

To THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.,
Governor General.

HON'BLE SIR,

Greek mer-
chants.

It gives me great uneasiness to be so troublesome to you concerning the affairs of the poor Greek merchants in the province of Sylhet, but, at the same time that I express my gratitude for your goodness in endeavouring to redress their grievances formerly represented by me, it is also proper that you be informed of your measures and orders directed for that purpose having not been attended with the desired success. I took the liberty in a former letter to mention to you that the Tannadar of Sylhet had (contrary to an

express order of Mr. Lindsay's) prevented entirely the operations of the Greeks in the manufacture of chunam. Though there appeared then some reason to imagine that Tannadar's disobedience was not disagreeable to the Collector, yet I did not think it proper for me to mention such a thing to you without more certain grounds. However, I must now beg pardon for suggesting that there is now every reason to suppose such was the case, for the Collector, instead of reprehending the Tannadar, has himself, not only openly hindered the operations of the Greeks, but has actually seized upon such materials as they had collected for their business, which will occasion a heavy loss to them: and, as I conceive it was far from your intention in sending the first order to the Collector that the poor Greeks should be sufferers, I request your goodness will not only excuse my presumption in giving so much trouble but will be likewise exerted in procuring redress by requiring Mr. Lindsay to indemnify the sufferers in the value of the materials provided by them for the making of chunam, or in any other way that you may judge proper.

I have, etc.,

CONSTANTINO PARTHENIO.

A true copy.

B. APLIN,

Assistant Secretary.

No. 239.

[Received 28th March 1784.]

TO THE HON'BLE R. LINDSAY, Esq.

CALCUTTA:

18th March 1784.

SIR,

You will receive instructions from the Revenue Committee, in consequence of orders for Government, amicably to settle and adjust a claim preferred to you by the Reverend Constantino Parthenio on the part of the Greek inhabitants of Bengal, who appear to have been aggrieved by their commercial intercourse with Sylhet, and as I have the most positive assurance from the Reverend Constantino Parthenio that in future their connexions with Sylhet shall be directed through the usual channel of the Resident, I have no doubt of your readily adjusting the present existing differences with them.

Greek merchants.

I have, etc.,

EDWARD WHEELER.

No. 240.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS,

Governor General, and Members
of the Supreme Council of Revenue,
Fort William.

SYLHET :

4th April 1784.

HON'BLE SIR AND GENTLEMEN,

Diwani Adawlat

It being the duty of every servant of this Government who is intrusted with the superintendence of a particular district to lay before you such grievance as the inhabitants labour under, in order that you may form a judgment whether or not they are deserving of redress, I beg leave to represent to you that the removal of the Dewanny Court from Sylhet has been productive of the very worst consequences throughout the district, so much so that there appears a very sensible decrease in cultivation for the last three years, and will continue so till the Court is re-established upon its former footing.

In the Sylhet Province, exclusive of the ryotts and others who hold lands in farm, are upwards of 4,000 independent proprietors of the soil, and there is no place in all the extensive possessions of the Hon'ble Company where the boundaries of each individual on the property of land in general is worse ascertained than in this p[rovin]ce. During the time I acted as Superintendent of the late Court, it was my constant study to remedy this evil, in which I had in a great measure succeeded by adjusting upwards of 2,000 complaints of the nature I now allude to; but since I have been deprived of my former authority (now upwards of three years) an endless confusion has prevailed. The Sylhet province is now under the jurisdiction of the Court of Sultans, but it is absolutely impossible for that tribunal to pass judgment in causes respecting the property of waste and litigated lands, without having it in its power to make constant references to the Kanongoe's duffry of the province, and records of the Dewanny Sherishta, which cannot be removed from the seat of collections.

Sultanssee is besides near one hundred miles distant from Sylhet which puts it out of the power of the parties, who are in general exceeding poor to pay the necessary attendance.

I now beg leave to lay before the Hon'ble Board a proposed establishment for a court of Dewanny Adawlat at Sylhet much upon the same footing as formerly. The whole expense does not exceed Rs. 298 per month, a very trifling when it is considered what great advantages this province will derive from the measure being adopted.

I have, etc.,

B. LINDSAT.

No. 241.

To DAVID ANDERSON, Esq.,
President, and Members
of the Committee of Revenue,
Fort William.

SYLHET :
6th April 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

I am favored with your letter of the 18th ultimo, enclosing copy of a letter **The French.** from the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council in their Political Department. In answer I must inform you that the French, neither as a nation or as individuals, ever held factories or landed possessions of any denomination within the limits of the Sylhet district.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 242.

WILLIAM WEBBER, Esq.,
Secretary, Revenue Department,
Fort William.

SYLHET :
The 15th April 1784.

SIR,

The Hon'ble Board having thought proper to appoint Mr. William Davidson, Surgeon, and Ensign William Troop to command the Sebundy Corps at Sylhet, I take the liberty of requesting that the allowances of these gentlemen may be fixed to enable [me] to enter their salaries in the monthly accounts. **Military.**

I before applied to the gentlemen of the Committee, who acquainted me that it was necessary for me to make application to the Hon'ble Board, as they have no orders on the subject.

I am, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 243.

[Received 14th April 1784.]

To THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

FORT WILLIAM :
The 5th April 1784.

SIR,

I request you will furnish me on receipt hereof with a Jumma Wasil **Accounts** Bawky account of the districts under your Collectorship for the year 1782-73

stating in the first column the jumma or settlement of 1192 perganatty sicca Rs. 2,33,824-5; second collections from the 1st Assin 1190 to the 30th of April 1783; third balance at that period: fourth collections since to the end of Bawdon 1190; and lastly balance outstanding if any at that period—all in sicca rupees, that I may be enabled to make proper entries in the General Books of the Revenue Department which I am now about closing. I beg leave to apprise you that the same kind of Jumma Wassil Bawky accounts is required from you in future at two stated times in the year, viz., the 30th of April and the end of Baudon.

I am, etc.,
CHARLES CROFTES,
Accountant General,
Revenue Department.

No. 244.

[Received 14th April 1784.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
 Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
 CALCUTTA :
 5th April 1784.

SIR,

Military.

We have received your letter of the 15th ultimo. As we have not any knowledge of Mr. Davidson's appointment, it is not in our power to fix his allowances nor to make any application to the Board on the subject. We cannot make any additional allowances to Lieutenant Troop without the previous sanction of Hon'ble the Governor General and Council, to whom he should make an application.

We are, etc.,
SAMUEL CHARTERS.
JOHN EVELYN.

No. 244A.

TO THE HON'BLE R. LINDSAY, ESQ.,
 Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
 CALCUTTA:
 24th May 1784.

SIR,

**Deductions
 allowed.**

We have received your letter of the 18th instant.
 In consequence of the inundation which you have represented to us, we agree to admit the sum of Rs. 3,000 as a deduction in your farming the new Settlement of Sylhet for 1191, but, in granting this indulgence, we expect you

will apply it with caution, and that you inform the renters it will be again annexed in the Jumma in the ensuing or following year. We direct that you will renew the engagements with those zemindars who have paid their revenue, and that you make publication for farming those districts which are in balance. We also direct that you transmit us an account of the balances with your opinion respecting their recovery, and the means to be used in effecting it.

We are, etc.,
SAMUEL CHARTERS.
C. CROFTES.

Exd.
A. W.,
Assistant.

No. 245.

TO DAVID ANDERSON, Esq.,
President, and Members
of the Committee of Revenue,
Fort William.

SYLHET:
31st May 1784

GENTLEMEN,

Sometime ago I took the liberty of requesting a small deduction from the jumma of the present year. Enclosed I beg leave to lay before you a list of six pergunnahs daily going to decay, because the revenue with which they are cessed is far greater than the zemindars can possibly afford to pay without ruining their talookdars and ryotts with exorbitant exactions. The whole deduction I now solicit does not exceed 15,000 cawns or Rs. 3,300, which when deducted from the present Jumma of 9,36,000 cawns, I flatter myself you will consider very moderate. One circumstance I beg leave to mention, *viz.*, that the Revenues of the Sylhet district have been gradually increased threefold since the year 1773. The zemindars, during this interval, have never received a deduction in Bengal has received the greatest indulgence from Government. Deductions asked for.

In the enclosed list I have only mentioned such pergunnahs as are more immediately distressed than the rest. There are still many others that cannot possibly pay the Revenues while under the management of the zemindars. In order to prevent their hereditary property from being totally lost to them for ever, their lands are now under charge of sezawals or farmers.

In my last letter I mentioned to you the disagreeable predicament the province labours under of having the principal crop (the Burah fusil) totally destroyed by inundations. The rains still continue to fall without intermission, and the price of grain to rise daily. Inundations.

I wait your orders respecting the new Settlement.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

Proposed deductions for the Bengal Year 1191.

Pergunnahs.	Jumma of 1188.	Jumma of 1189 with increase.	Proposed deduction for 1191.	Proposed Jumma for 1191.
1	2	3	4	5
Beetal	4,721 2 0 3	5,221 2 0 3	800	4,421 2 0 3
Dinarpore	19,760 13 15 1	24,760 13 15 1	2,000	22,760 13 15 1
Chowallees	36,719 2 2 2	42,919 2 2 2	3,000	39,919 2 2 2
Lungleh	25,858 3 17 1	38,856 3 17 1	1,500	30,358 3 17 1
Chaubgant	18,485 0 12 0	23,685 0 12 0	1,000	22,685 0 12 0
Beezoorah	41,719 3 16 2	47,719 3 16 2	2,000	45,719 3 16 2
Sundry Talooks ... ..	...	...	5,000	...

Proposed deduction 15,300

SYLHET 31st May 1784.

R. LINDSAY.

No. 246.

DAVID ANDERSON, Esq.,

President, Members
of the Committee of Revenue,
Fort William.

SYLHET:

25th June 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to herewith to transmit you the Settlement and Kist-bundee of the Sylhet province for the Bengal year 1191, as also the towjee accounts for the month of Bysack which was not before forwarded with the accounts for May, as the Settlement was not then made, together with duplicates of the whole in the Persian and Bengal languages.

Inundations.

It is with the greatest concern I acquaint you of a most dreadful calamity that has befallen this province from an inundation: the situation of the people here at present is truly deplorable.

By an incessant rain, which has fallen with great violence for these 18 days past, the waters have risen to such a height as the oldest men now living never remember to have seen. The damage that has been done by it cannot be at present exactly estimated. Great part of the town of Sylhet, which stands on one of the highest sites in the whole province, has been overflowed,

many of the houses having from four to six feet of water in them, and others are rendered uninhabitable. The whole country has also been laid under water by the river having overflowed and broken its banks, carrying everything before it. The greatest part of the town of Banjah, a large and populous place, has been swept away, and I am sorry to add that unfortunately many persons have perished, and an innumerable quantity of cattle. A great deal of other damage has also been done there. Accounts are daily coming in from other villages that have shared the same fate. Such as I have received contain but a very imperfect description of the damage, as the communication with the mofussil is in a great measure cut off by the severity of the weather. When further [accounts] arrive, I shall be more particular. Persons who came last from thence describe a scene too dreadful for humanity to behold or words to express.

About two months ago the zamindars were so unfortunate as to lose their principal crop (the burrah fussil). The moorah, which would have been cut in Jeyte, is also totally lost. The greatest part of the crop, the Aus which were last sown, has also been destroyed. Added to the loss of these crops, a considerable quantity of rice lodged in golahs has been washed away; and, in consequence of this disaster, the price of that article has risen considerably. For these 3 days the inhabitants of the town have received no supply either from the neighbouring villages or pergunnahs. Everything in my power has been exerted for the relief of the unhappy sufferers; and I beg to affirm to you that no endeavour on my part shall be wanting to mitigate those hardships, which they must unavoidably suffer from the peculiar severity of the season.

In order to remedy, as far as lies in my power, the fatal consequences of this disaster, I have thought it expedient to prohibit the exportation of grain from this province for the present, which I hope will meet with your approbation, and that you will favour me with any further orders you may judge necessary on this subject.

I have, etc.,
W. HYNDMAN.

No. 247.

DAVID ANDERSON, Esq.,
President, and Members
of the Committee of Revenue,
Fort William.

SYLHET:

10th July 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

I had the honour to address you on the 25th ultimo on the subject of the distressed situation of the inhabitants of this province who suffered greatly from an inundation that was chiefly occasioned by a large body of water which came down in a torrent from the Jaintah and Cachar Hills in the course of one night. All the pergunnahs contiguous to Sylhet were laid under

water, and a great many lives (from the suddenness of it) have been lost, and almost all the cattle. It has since spread over the whole province and done like damage. Since I wrote last the weather had moderated greatly and a communication is now again open with the mofussil.

In consequence of the numerous representations made me of losses sustained, I left Sylhet for some days on a circuit to such pergunnahs as were most contiguous, in order that by a local view I might the better to ascertain the truth of them, and I am sorry to say that they do not appear to me exaggerated. Through the several pergunnahs I went there are a very few villages left, and scarcely any ryotts to be seen, those that have been saved having retired to the hills. The crop, which was ready for cutting, has been entirely lost, and, from the appearance of the country there is no probability of their being able to sow another for some time, though the waters have taken off greatly. For a quantity of grain, which had been kept for seed, has likewise been destroyed. The consequence of this calamity has been that as the ryotts have quitted the lands, and the zemindars have not been able to collect them together again, the collections are now entirely at a stand, nor can I, though my utmost endeavours have been used, realize a single cowrie of revenues yet. I beg leave to assure you they shall be continued to be exerted as far as lays in my power.

I have, etc.,

W. HYNDMAN.

No. 248.

[Received 19th July 1784.]

To MR. HYNDMAN,

Acting Collector of Sylhet.

CALCUTTA:

5th July 1784.

SIR,

Export of rice

We have received your letter of the 25th ultimo enclosing the Settlement of Sylhet for 1191, which we have submitted to the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council. We are much concerned at the melancholy accident which has happened in your district. We would with cheerfulness adopt any measure likely to contribute to the relief of the sufferers, but until those are known, we can only recommend them to your attention.

As the Hon'ble Board have desired that there should be no prohibitions to the exporting of rice from one province to another, we cannot authorize your prohibiting the exportation of it from Sylhet, and we must desire that you will take off the prohibition.

We are, etc.,

SAMUEL CHARLES.

J. EVELYN.

No. 249.

[Received 4th August.]

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA:

22nd July 1784.

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

SIR,

We have to inform you that the Hon'ble Board have approved of the ^{Settlement} ^{1191.} settlement you have made of the Sylhet district for the Bengal year 1191.

We are, etc.,

SAMUEL CHARTERS.

JOHN EVELYN.

No. 250.

[Received 10th August.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,

FORT WILLIAM:

29th July 1784.

SIR,

We have received your letters of the 4th and 15th April with the enclosure accompanying.

4th April.—In consideration of the reason you assign, we agree to allow of your exercising a concurrent Dewanny jurisdiction with the Judge of the Dewanny Adawlut at Sultanssee, as far immediately regards the limits of your own Collectorship, and for the purpose authorise the establishment of officers proposed by you.

Diwan
Adalat.

15th ditto.—We have fixed the allowance to be drawn by the Surgeon at your station at 300 sicca rupees per month, and direct that Ensign William Troop draw pay and batta agreeable to his rank.

We are, etc.,

EDWD. WHEELER.

JOHN MCPHERSON.

JOHN STABLES.

No. 251.

[Received 20th August 1784.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,

CALCUTTA:

5th August 1784.

SIR,

We send you enclosed for your information a copy of a letter from the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council.

We are, etc.,

C. CROFTES.

J. EVELYN.

Etd.

W. HAVARHAM,
Secretary.

TO MR. SAMUEL CHARTERS,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue, Fort William.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT:

29th July 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

Diwani adalut
at Suanssee.

We have to advise you of our having authorized the Collector of Sylhet to exercise a concurrent Dewany jurisdiction with the Judge of the Dewanny Adalut at Sultanssee as far as immediately regards the limit of his Collectorship, and allowed him an establishment of officers for this purpose amounting to Sicca Rupees two hundred and ninety-eight per month.

Surgeon's
salary.

We have also agreed to allow the Surgeon at that station a salary of Rupees 300 per month, and Ensign William Troop, commanding the Sebundy Corps, is to draw pay and batta agreeable to his rank.

We are, etc.,

EDWD. WHEELER.

JOHN MCPHERSON.

JOHN STABLES,

No. 252.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.,
Governor General, and Members
of the Supreme Council of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET :

2nd September 1784.

HON'BLE SIR AND GENTLEMEN,

I take the liberty of acquainting you that I returned to my station a few days ago and am sorry to be under the disagreeable necessity of confirming the accounts you have already received respecting the unhappy predicament this district now labours under. Nothing can equal the distress experienced by the inhabitants for these three months past. In addition to the loss of the grand crop, not a vestige of which remains, a second and still greater misfortune has befallen them in the loss of cattle. More than two-thirds have already died for want of food, and I see but little prospect of saving the remainder, as there is not a tuft of grass or smallest spot of verdure to be seen from the banks of the Burhampooter to Sylhet, a tract of country at least one hundred miles in extent. This country, through which I passed, exhibits the appearance of an open sea, in the midst of which a few islands appear scattered. Even upon these wretched spots, though in general raised about 15 feet from the plain, the inhabitants are obliged to take shelter from the waves and inclemency of the weather, by erecting stages, for a temporary habitation, etc., etc. Inundations.

[As in letter No. 253.]

Although you have done me the honour to vest me with judicial powers within the limits of my Collectorship, the Sulta-see courts continue to exercise their former authority and to send jeons throughout this district upon matters both civil and criminal. As this must be productive of the utmost confusion and at the same time [distress to] the inhabitants, I hope it will appear necessary to the Hon'ble Board to forbid Mr. Hunter to interfere within the limits of my jurisdiction.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 253.

TO DAVID ANDERSON, Esq.,

President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET :

3rd September 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

I take the liberty of informing you that I returned to my station a few days ago, after closing the accounts of Sawon by Mr. Hyndman. The Revenue in demand for this month you will observe from the towjee amounts to Rs 157,300, of which only 41,500 have been realised. The residue remains outstanding, and it is with pain I give you my opinion that this balance, so far from being reduced, will continue to accumulate during the whole Failure of crops and consequent misery of inhabitants.

course of this year, and, if only one-half of the Jumma is collected, I am afraid it must be done with a degree of rigor inconsistent with humanity and sound policy. None but those who have been convinced by ocular demonstration can form an idea of the unhappy state this province now labours under. The misery at this moment experienced by the inhabitants is grievous beyond description.

In addition to the total failure of the grand crop, not one grain of which has been saved, two-thirds of their cattle have already died for want of nourishment, and I see but very little prospect of saving the remainder, for not a tuft of grass or verdure of any kind is seen from one end of the district to the other. The low lands, though always overflowed at this season of the year, produced luxuriant crops of grain and pasture for cattle, but the late rise of the water was more rapid than has ever been known in the memory of man, and overwhelmed the whole province in general ruin.

The country through which I passed in my way to Sylhet exhibits the appearance of an open sea, in the midst of which a few small islands appear. Even upon these wretched spots, though in general raised near fifteen feet above the level of the country, the inhabitants are obliged to take shelter from the waves and inclemency of the weather by erecting stages for a temporary residence. Not only their crop and their cattle, but their houses and the grain intended for seed, are gone. I observed and listened to their lamentations as I passed along with a degree of sorrow and compassion I never before experienced, which communicated to my feelings the more forcibly, because it was totally out of my power to afford the smallest assistance or alleviate their present distress. Both men and women were employed in endeavouring to save the lives of the few cattle that still remained by diving in this open sea and scraping from the bottom roots of grass and weeds for their food, which can only prove a temporary relief. The waters have as yet only fallen about six inches, and the rains continue without intermission. I am now using every means in my power to encourage the sowing of new seed upon the high ground adjoining to the hills, to be ready to plant the moment the water takes off; and the inhabitants, from motives of self preservation, I am happy to find, are now showing a greater degree of industry than they ever exhibited upon any former occasion.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 254.

To DAVID ANDERSON, Esq.,

President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET :

4th September 1794.

GENTLEMEN,

Fort at Ponduah.

Having lately compleated the fort at Ponduah, erected at that place for the protection of the province from incursions of the hill people, I have now the pleasure of enclosing you a sketch of the same. The expence of raising the building, the excavation, and ramparts amounts to Rs. 2,945,

which is a few hundred more than my original estimate. The excess is owing to the place being much larger than I first intended in order that the merchants who trade in [copper] might have a safe place wherein to deposit their property ; but I must observe that the cheapness of the materials and stay to labourers has enabled me to compleat this work much cheaper than it would have been done in any other part of the country.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 255.

To DAVID ANDERSON, Esq.,

President, and Members to the Committee of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET :

6th September 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

From the several representations already transmitted, you are fully acquainted with the state of this district. Having since my returns [to] this place made every minute investigation in [to] the state of the collections, I find that from the beginning of the month of May to the present period, now upwards of four months, the zamindars have not paid one single anna of their revenues. The small sums already brought to account in part payment of the revenues of the present year have been collected from the securities, who, though the most responsible men in the district, while they have no remittances from the pergunnahs. The truth is the zamindars, under the cloak of the misfortunes lately befallen the country, have formed a general resolution of withholding the rents. I am now using my utmost endeavours to overcome these formal combinations, but confinement and still more severe punishment have hitherto been of no effect whatever ; and, if I have to threaten to sell their lands, they will know that no purchaser will appear. It would be inconsistent with reason to expect full payment of their lands from me during the present crisis, still there is a medium it is more unreasonable in them to withhold the whole. You may place full confidence upon my exerting my utmost abilities in promoting the interest of my Hon'ble Employers which in its primitive object must include the welfare and prosperity of the country ; but at the same time I will be happy to receive your instruction upon the present distressing occasion.

Rents withheld
under plea of
distress.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 256.

TO THE HON'BLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector at Sylhet,

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,

FORT WILLIAM :

13th September 1784.

SIR,

I am directed by the Hon'ble Board to acknowledge the receipt of your address to them of the 2nd instant, and to acquaint you that orders have been issued to the Committee of Revenue on the subject of the former part thereof, and with respect to the latter part the Board have granted to you the exclusive jurisdiction as Judge and Magistrate of the Province of Sylhet, and directed the Judge at Sultansee accordingly to confine his authority to such parts of the jurisdiction of the Sultansee Adawlut as are exclusive of Sylhet.

I am, etc.,

B. APLIN,

Acting Secretary.

No. 257.

[Received 25th September 1784.]

TO THE HON'BLE MR. ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

COMMITTEE OF REVENUE,

CALCUTTA :

13th September 1784.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 3rd instant. From the general distress of the inhabitants as stated by you, we can only desire that you will continue to exert your utmost endeavours to alleviate their sufferings. In regard to the publick revenue we can only recommend to you to adopt your demands to the ability of the people to pay, and to afford to the inhabitants every encouragement in renewing their cultivation as soon as the waters subside. As we will always be ready to forward any proposition which you may have to offer for the relief of the inhabitants, we desire you will state to us any measures which may, in your opinion, be conducive to these purposes.

We are, etc.,

SAML. CHARTERS.

JOHN EVELYN.

No. 258.

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,

Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,

CALCUTTA :

22rd September 1784.

SIR,

We have received your two letters of the 4th and 6th September. We agree to admit the additional expense incurred in building the mud fort at Panduah. In making and enforcing your demands upon the zemindars of Sylhet for rents, we must trust to your discretion. If on the one hand real distress is admitted as a ground for relinquishing the customary demands of Government, every precaution should be used to prevent any unfair advantage being taken of this indulgence by the zemindars. We can only, therefore, in general direct you to proportion your demands for rent to the abilities of the renters, without taxing their abilities so far as to affect their immediate subsistence or their means and endeavours in future for restoring the cultivation of their lands. In this your own knowledge and discretion must guide you, and, whilst every indulgence is made for real distress, we trust to your endeavours to break a combination which has for its object the total loss of revenue in the Sylhet Province.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE.

J. EVELYN.

No. 259. .

[Received 3rd October.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,

Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

23rd September 1784.

SIR,

We send you the enclosed copy of a letter from the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council for your information and guidance.

We are,

J. SHORE.

JOHN EVELYN.

(COPY.)

TO MR. SAMUEL CHARTERS,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,

FORT WILLIAM :

13th September 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

Believe of distressed district.

The Collector of Sylhet having addressed us on the state of that district, we, in consequence of the very distressed situation of the inhabitants from the evident and unavoidable calamity of the inundation in that district, desire you will write to the Collector not to press the inhabitants for the payment of more revenue than what they can easily afford, on the contrary, to contribute all he can to the relief of their distresses, and that we, on this occasion, rely particularly on his humanity and integrity, and will take into our favourable consideration any abatement of revenue which he may represent as essentially necessary.

We are, etc.,

EDWARD WHEELER.

JOHN MCPHERSON.

No. 260.

TO THE HON'BLE WARREN HASTINGS.

SYLHET :

24th September 1784.

HON'BLE SIR,

Cowries.

After my long residence at Sylhet it must have appeared to you strange that I could give you no satisfactory information respecting the Sylhet cowrie, how they became the currency of the province, and from whence they were originally brought. This has not been owing to want of curiosity on my part. From the moment of my first arrival I considered it a subject deserving of the most minute enquiry ; I applied for information to the oldest inhabitants, who all proved equally ignorant ; nor could the most intelligent men in the place, all of whom I consulted, give the smallest hint towards solving the difficulty. I can, therefore, only furnish you with my own [ideas] of the matter, founded upon such observations as I have been able to make.

In the short conversation we had upon this subject, you was pleased to remark that the Sylhet differs materially from the Maldivia cowrie, and that there was a probability of the former having been imported from beyond the mountains at the back of Sylhet. This, I can venture to assure you, is a mistaken idea. Panduah and Joyntah are the two grand passes of communication to the countries lying between us and the Assam boundaries, and I am well acquainted with every article of commerce brought from thence, among which cowries are not, nor ever were, included. I must confess that my curiosity to investigate this matter was by no means so strong until I had your opinion on the subject, because I concluded that the shells were

originally imported from the Maldivia Islands, for, upon comparing them with the cowries current in most every other part of Bengal, I found little or no difference in the appearance further than what is occasioned by age and constant friction. The nearer you approach to Calcutta the fairer this shell appears, owing to the markets being constantly replenished with fresh supplies; but it is a long time before they find their way to Sylhet and there circulated for many years before they are re-exported. Upon becoming acquainted with your opinion, I went immediately into the bazar at Calcutta, and from twelve bankers' shops carried away a handful from each of the latest importation. These I carefully preserved and enclosed in bag No. 1. Bag No. 2 contains a few handfuls as taken indiscriminately from the Sylhet treasury.

Upon examining these two parcels I dare say you will find no further difference than what is occasioned in the manner already described.

Bag No. 3 contains a small quantity taken from on board Maldivian boat^s lately arrived at Chittagong. These differ most essentially both in shape and appearance from the Sylhet and Calcutta cowrie. Since I received this parcel, I have taken much pains to ascertain the particular islands whence they came; and in the course of enquiry I have learned that there are some islands among the Laccadivias and Maldivias where these rugged cowries are more plenty than in others, but that they, as well as the cowrie with the smooth surface, are found in all the islands. Even among the Sylhet cowries as well as the current in the southern districts there are many to be found of the same shape as contained in the parcel from Chittagong. I, therefore, do not think it can be doubted that the Sylhet cowries were originally imported by sea and from the Maldivia and Luckadive Islands.

The next point to be determined is how this shell became the only currency of Sylhet, a district so very remote from the sea. This can only be imputed to the extreme poverty of the country and inhabitants in general, and to the multiplicity of land holders in all the subordinate gradations. Exclusive of those who call themselves zemindars and chowdies, I compute that there are at least 3,000 people who hold grants of lands under various denominations, and their rents are in most instances so very trifling, that it would be attended with inconvenience to collect, or for them to make monthly payments in silver. Exclusive of chunam there was formerly no manufacture of any kind to draw specie into the province. The only articles of trade were rice in small quantities, a good deal of pa'dy, suktee or dry fish, and coarse guzzies,¹ which were carried for sale to the different markets bordering upon the Dacca Province. Here, as in other parts of the country, there are no pykars, who purchase from the farmer to retail again at an advance price. Every ryott carries the produce of his labour to market by water; and the purchaser at the gunge finds it far more convenient to traffick with cowries than specie, because the cargo of these poor people often does not amount to more than two or three cawns.

A remark made by many of my predecessors *viz.*, that there is a constant exportation, no^s visible importation, and yet the quantity does not appear to diminish, requires a particular explanation. It must first be determined when this great exportation commenced. Upon enquiry I have found that none, at least a very inconsiderable quantity, was exported until about 18 or 20

¹ Guzzie [gas] a po kind of cotton cloth, perhaps so named from being a gas in breadth.

years ago. The greatest parts of the lands paid no revenue, but were held by individuals rent-free upon a feudal tenure; and the small sums collected as revenue were by no means sufficient to repay the expence of the large establishment kept up for the protection of the province. Mahomed Ali Khan brother of the present Razah Khan was the first who transported cowries to the City¹ in any considerable quantity. Even then this exportation did not exceed one lakh and fifty-thousand crowns annually, and the cowries imported in the manner already described, I have every reason to suppose, was always equal to the quantity exported until the year 1777. Most of the lands held by individuals, as servants of Government, being then resumed, the from 350,000 were revenues raised to 8 lacks; and the exportation increased in proportion. This continued for three years, when, finding from experience that so constant a drain operated in a most alarming degree to the ruin of the country, I, by degrees, established different manufactures; and I have the satisfaction to find that I can now remit the neat revenues to Calcutta without exporting any part of the currency the beneficial efforts of which are now sensibly felt throughout the district.

I have, etc,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 261.

To DAVID ANDERSON, Esq.,

President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue, Fort William.

SYLHET:

24th September 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

Revenue
officers
Sylhet.

In reply to your letter of the 6th instant, I must inform you that there are no other covenanted servants attached to this station than myself and Mr. Hyndman, my Assistant, whose duty it is to transmit the publick business when I am [in] disposed, or when absent from Sylhet.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 262.

[Received 10th October.]

To THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,

Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,

CALCUTTA;

27th September 1784.

SIR,

I am directed by the Committee of Revenue to request you will inform me the year, month and day of the month, that you were appointed to your

¹ The city, that is Murshidabad.

Collectorship, also what rank you held at that period in the service. This information is required to enable me to fill up the spaces in a security bond, which the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council have directed to be executed by every gentleman concerned in the collection of the revenues.

I am further directed to desire you will inform me the names of the two gentlemen who are to be your securities, as they are to be inserted in the bond also.

I am, etc.,

WILLIAM HAVERKAM,
Secretary.

No. 263.

To DAVID ANDERSON, Esq.,
President, and Members
of the Committee of Revenue,
Fort William.

SYLHET :

28th September 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

I am duly favored with your letter of the 13th September. In reply I can only answer [you] that I will continue to exert my utmost abilities to alleviate the distress which the inhabitants of this district now labour under, but I am sorry to say that the price of grain which is now 200 per cent. dearer than in former years will not considerably fall until the month of May next, as the few partial spots of high grounds that are now planting will barely produce rice sufficient for the consumption of the farmers. Prospect of the district.

The greatest difficulty to encounter will be to persuade the ryotts to return to their former habitations, all the lower part of this province being totally depopulated. To effect this, I have issued publications, promising them every indulgence in my power, but the greatest part, I am afraid, will not come back, because by settling in the neighbouring districts they are, by the established custom, excused the rents of such grains as they cultivate for the first 12 months after they settle.

It is unnecessary at this period for me to offer any propositions for the relief of the inhabitants: the only thing I could now submit to your consideration would be a temporary suspension of the revenue, but this has already taken place, the collections having been almost totally at a stand for some time past. In about a month hence, I hope the revenues will again begin to circulate; and I flatter myself there will not be so great a deficiency at the close of the year as we had some time ago reason to expect. Beejoorah a pergunnah of about Rs. 8,000 jumma being now ten months in arrears of revenue, and totally gone to ruin, both in point of population and cultivation, by the oppression of the numerous partners, joined to the misfortunes of the present year, I have found it necessary to prevent a total loss of so great a part of the revenue by giving the pergunnah on farm for the term of six years

Beejoorah.

to Ram Rutton Tagoor, without the consent of the proprietors, whose interest, in my opinion, has been much attended to by this act, as it will be the means of saving their hereditary property from being sold by public sale.

As it is the first instance of the kind having happened in this district, I request it may receive your sanction.

I have, etc.,

B. LINDSAY.

No. 264.

To DAVID ANDERSON Esq.,

President, and Members

of the Committee of Revenue.

Calcutta.

[No date.]

GENTLEMEN,

Distress of
the districts. Enclosed I have the pleasure to transmit you Treasury Account, Charges Collections, Charges Zemindary, Charges General for the month of October, Touji accounts for the month of Assin with duplicates of the whole in the Persian and Bengal languages.

The scarcity of grain, I am sorry to say, is now felt most grievously by the inhabitants, particularly in the lower districts. Notwithstanding the unremitted attention with which I have superintended the distribution of the rice still remains in the district, numbers of the poorer sort are daily carried off by famine.

Under these distressing circumstances, I hope it is unnecessary for me to make any apology for the revenues falling in arrears. In fact the collections are totally at a stand, and must continue so until the crop is brought to market. After examining the state of each separate pergunnah, and ascertaining the losses sustained, I see little or no prospect of more than half of the revenues being realised, and for the satisfaction and encouragement of the farmers I have found it necessary to acquaint them that a very large remission will be allowed : under the faith of which promise I am in hopes that many of the ryotts who have deserted the country will return.

The crop upon the ground, though confined to particular spots, bears a very favourable appearance; and in fifteen days more I flatter myself the temporary distresses of the inhabitants will be greatly relieved.

I am, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 266.

[Received 19th October 1784.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,

CALCUTTA:

7th October 1784.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 28th ultimo, and approve the measures you have taken to alleviate the distress of the people. We are sorry we cannot confirm the lease you have granted to Ramrutan Tagoor of Beejoorah for six years, it being contrary to the orders we have received from the Board. But you may grant a lease for one year with a clause that, in case the former pays his revenue and conducts himself to the satisfaction of Government he may expect from the favour and justice of Government a renewal of his lease.

Six years' lease not allowed.

We are, etc.,

J. SHORE,

JOHN EVELYN.

No. 267.

TO WILLIAM HAVERKAM, Esq.,
Secretary to the Committee of Revenue.

SYLHET:

13th October 1784.

SIR,

In reply to your letter of the 27th of September, I beg leave to acquaint you that I was appointed Collector of the Sylhet district the 3rd of January 1784, upon the removal of the Farmer. My rank at that time in the Company's service was Junior Merchant. The gentlemen I propose for my securities are Messrs. Ramsay, Hannay and Bernard McCullum.

Date of Lindsay's appointment.

I am, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 268.

[Received 24th November 1784.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA ;
8th November 1784.

SIR,

We have to inform you that the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council have issued the necessary orders to the Commissioners of Customs to take off the duties on grain intended for your districts.

We are, etc.,
J. SHORE,
J. EVELYN.

No. 269.

[Received 19th October 1784.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

COMMITTEE OF GRAIN,
FORT WILLIAM :
4th October 1784.

SIR,

Finding the price of paddy and rice still to continue very high and that the markets have not experienced any material relief and from the late very plentiful crop, we are led to believe that the grain has stagnated in its first source of supply, and that the ryotts and landholders, being able to defray the present demands of Government rents from the sale of a very small proportion of the produce. have locked up the rest, in order to ensure a continuation of the exorbitant profits they are now reaping. To the end, therefore, that some degree of check to the uncontrolled exercise of so pernicious a practice, and that, in the midst of plenty, the poorer of the inhabitants may not be subjected to all the severities of a real scarcity, we desire that you

circulate perwannahs throughout the districts under your charge to warn all zemindars, talookdars, farmers, ryotts, landholders of every denomination, and grain dealers of every description against the hoarding of grain, and, in particular, of the produce of the late crop, and to notify them that whosoever shall be found to hoard up grain and to evade selling or bringing it to market in order to exact an exorbitant price shall have their grain seized and confiscated to Government and be themselves made a publick example of.

We are, etc.,

THO. GRAHAM.

G. TEMPLE.

F. MUR.

No. 269.

[Received 24th December.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,

Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,

CALCUTTA :

25th November 1784.

SIR,

We enclose a copy of a letter which we have received from the Hon'ble Governor General and Council. We desire that you will communicate on the subject of it with the several zemindars and landholders in the districts under your superintendence ; and afterwards convey to us your opinion, stating the amount which, you think, may be raised from them by voluntary contributions for the purposes mentioned by the Hon'ble Governor General and Council.

We are, Sir, etc.,

J. ANDERSON,

J. EVELYN.

No. 270.

[Answered 7th March 1785.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA :
23rd December 1784.

SIR,

Secretary's
fees.

We enclose you a Persian copy of the following amount of sums due on the Secretary's rissom balance of amilnamah fees due on the settlement—

of 1189	...	...	Rs. 175-15-17-2
of 1190	...	...	„ 467-10-7-2
Total			„ 643-10-5-0

and desire you will collect the sums from the different zemindars and farmers. In case any of them should not be now under your authority, we desire you will transmit an authentic copy of the demand to the Collector under whose authority it is now placed, or, if that should not be known to you to send it to us.

We desire you will return an answer to this letter by the 15th of next month, stating the amount collected by you, or, in case of balance, the reasons which have prevented the sums being realized.

We are, etc.,
D. ANDERSON.
J. SHORE.

No. 277.

TO THE HON'BLE R. LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA :
6th December 1784.

SIR,

Secretary's
fees.

We have received your towjee for Assin. We can only recommend to you the enforcing the payment of the rents as far as is compatib'e with the indulgence due to the circumstance of the renters.

We are, etc.,
D. ANDERSON.
J. SHORE.

No. 278.

To DAVID ANDERSON, Esq.,

President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue,
Fort William,

SYLHET :

12th December 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

The waters having totally subsided, it is necessary, without delay, to begin the repairs of the banks of the river, which in many places have been thrown down, levelled with the low country. It was (from the) breaking of these banks that the district suffered such material damage some months ago ; and, unless they are put into a thorough state of repairs during the dry season, not only the Sylhet lands, but the adjoining pergunnahs under Dacca, must unavoidably experience the same calamity during the ensuing rains.

All the breaches upon the Surmah, the Mannoo, and Cussearah rivers I have myself surveyed, and it is my opinion that the expense of repairs and filling up the excavations formed by the rivers will amount at least to six or eight thousand rupees. It may perhaps appear to you reasonable that the zemindars and landholders should contribute towards the expense themselves.

For the purpose of retaining a fixed sum of Rs. 170 is collecting from the district, and to collect more is impracticable, for so exceeding zealous are these people of the smallest innovation that nothing could induce them to increase the contributions one rupee more, not even was it to save themselves and their lands from immediate ruin. This I have experienced in many instances of the same kind, whose I offered to their consideration proposals tending to the publick utility.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

[Copy.]

To Mr. JOHN SHORE,

Acting President, and Members
of the Committee of Revenue.

FORT WILLIAM,

19th November 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

It having been suggested by the Collector of Boglepore that a voluntary contribution might be raised from the zemindars and landholders of his district sufficient to defray the expense of erecting in it a magazine for grain on the same plan as the one constructing at Patna. We desire you will ascertain and report to us how far such means are generally practicable in the other districts of Bengal.

We are, etc.,

WARREN HASTINGS.

JOHN MCPHERSON.

JOHN STABLES.

No. 279.

[Received 6th January 1785.]

To THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,

Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,

CALCUTTA :

30th December 1784.

SIR,

River embank-
ment.

We have received your letter of the 14th instant, and authorize you to make the necessary repairs to the embankments of the Surmah, Cusseurah and Munnoo rivers, taking care not to expend more than the sum stated in your letter. We trust to your care and attention for having the business effectually executed with as little expence as the nature of it will admit.

We are, etc.,

D. ANDERSON.

J. SHORE.

No. 280.

To WILLIAM COWPER,

Acting President, and Members of the
Committee of Revenue,

Fort William.

SYLHET :

7th March 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

Establish-
ment.

I have been favoured with your letter of the 7th ultimo, and now take the liberty to inform you that my Establishment consists of only one assistant, at a salary of Rs. 500 per month. Herewith I transmit you an account of the Establishment of the Bengal officers, with their salaries, which upon a more reasonable footing than any of the other collectorships in Bengal, nor do I think that the business can be conducted at a smaller expence to Government.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

Establishment of Bengal Officers at Sylhet.

Dewani Office.				
Dewan	...	...	...	100
Paishcar	...	...	...	40
Sherishtadar	...	...	...	25
2 Moonshees	...	...	...	50
4 Bengal Mohrirs	...	...	...	45
3 Persian do.	...	...	...	45
1 Nazir and Deputy	...	...	...	25
1 Cutcherly Zamendar and 12 peons			...	48
1 Wolcannah ditto		...	...	50
Khazanchee	...	...	..	25
Podar	...	...	...	12
18 Cowrie tellers	...	...	...	60
6 Coolies	...	...	...	18

Sicca Rs. 543—cawns 2,526-10-7

Sicca Rs. 543.

Cawns 2,526 10 7.

No. 281.

To WILLIAM COWPER, Esq.,
Acting President, and Members of the
Committee of Revenue,
Fort William.

SYLHET :

8th March 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

I duly received your letter of the 7th December, and must beg. your Accounts. indulgence for not answering it sooner.

The balance of this collectorship for the Bengal year 1188

	was—	Rs.	a.	p.
		85,483	4	0
Of which I have collected and brought to account.		37,345	0	0
Remains	...	48,138	0	0
Sicca Rupees	...	10,345	0	0

No part of which I am prospect of recovering at present. You are pleased to observe that in my accounts of 1189, the balance appeared to be

Rs. 48,926-15-0, but, upon your having recourse to my Settlement, it, there appears only Rs. 16,735-12-0.

I cannot comprehend how the balance in any of the accounts I have transmitted can possibly be so great as Rs. 48,926. I, therefore, take the liberty of requesting that you will favour me with a copy of the accounts and statement you allude to. You enable me to give an explanation from accounts. I am clear that the balance that year did not exceed cowns 58,352-14, or Sicca Rs. 12,540-9-4-3.

I need not observe to you that misunderstanding between my accounts and those of the Khalsah for sometime past arises from the alteration in the time of closing the collections, and I am apprehensive that the Khalsah accounts are kept in the Pargunnatty style as before. All accounts demanded of me in future, I hope, will be required to be drawn up in the Bengal year.

I am, etc.

R. LINDSAY.

No. 252.

To WILLIAM COWPER, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue,

FORT WILLIAM.

SYLHET:

8th March 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

Accounts.

I am favoured with your letter of the 3rd January, wherein you desire me to transmit you the accounts of my Collectorship for the Bengal year 1190 or 1783-4 English style, viz:—

In English settle[ment].—

In Persian { Jumma Wasil Baukee from Assin to Bawdon.
And General Treasury Account.

The Account Settlement I now enclose you, but must beg leave to observe that the accounts of this Collectorship for near three years past have run in the Bengal style, viz. from the 1st of Bysack to the 30th of Chait, not in the Purgunnatty style as formerly.

Was I to draw up the accounts in the manner prescribed, it would occasion the greatest confusion between my accounts and those of the Khalsah, by once more confounding the two styles together, and still would be fictitious by but corresponding with any account in my possession, as the Sylhet or Purgunnatty form of holding the Poonea and closing my annual accounts was abolished by Order.

I now transmit you Jumma Wasil Baukee and General Treasury Account for the Bengal year 1190, or 1783-4 English style.

I am, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 283.

To WILLIAM COWPER, Esq.,

Acting President, and Member of the Committee of Revenue.

Fort William.

SYLHET:

13th March 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

From the last Towjee account transmitted, you will perceive that the balance of the present year has accumulated to cawus 263,000, so that there is nearly one-half of the revenues outstanding to the end of Maug. It is at present unnecessary for me to recapitulate the causes of this extraordinary balance, from the confidence hitherto placed in me by the Hon'ble Board and your Committee, I flatter myself you are convinced that, from the moment the inundation happened, I have done everything in my power, not only to alleviate the distress of the inhabitants, but to realise as much of the Revenues as appeared consistent with the indulgence Government was inclined to show the unfortunate sufferers. Long before it was possible for me to receive a reply to the letters addressed to you on the subject, I took [it] upon me to assemble the zemindars, and did not hesitate in making a voluntary offer to relinquish one-half of the demands of the Government for the current year, which had the immediate good effect of inducing many hundred families to return who had deserted their habitations, and would otherwise have been lost to the district for ever. They have since signed me engagements, which I was in hopes would have been punctually fulfilled; but, from the miserable state of the district and the well grounded complaints from all quarters, I have every reason to believe that the sum I expected will not be fully realized.

Arrears
Revenue. of

From the minute survey of the districts under my superintendence it evidently appears that more than two-thirds of the cattle have been starved to death or swept away by the floods, and the few that remain are so exhausted that they are of little use to the farmers. Upon the low lands one-fourth of the inhabitants have died for want of subsistence or the unwholesome food they have lived upon for many months past. One-fourth more have deserted the province, and the rest are so desperate that there is hardly the sign of cultivation left. Of all these circumstances I have had ocular demonstration from local enquiry, and I declare upon honour that my representations, so far from being exaggerated, are not painted in their colours.

Distress.

As it is now drawing towards the conclusion of the year, I flatter myself you will take into your consideration the Settlement for the ensuing. I hope, at the same time, you will excuse the liberty I take in acquainting you that unless great indulgence is shown, for the next three years, the country is inevitable ruined.

Enclosed is a Settlement, which I beg leave to submit to your consideration. From 9,35,000, the present jumma, I proposed a deduction the first year 1,90,000, to be increased to the former amount during the next two succeeding.

I have, etc.,

B. LINDSAY.

No. 284.

To WILLIAM COWPER, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Council of Revenue.

FORT WILLIAM,

SYLHET :

16th March 1789.

GENTLEMEN,

Salaries.

In reply to your letter of the 3rd instant, I must inform you that the establishment monthly salary and allowances of the civil servants attached to this station are as follows—

R. Lindsay, Collector's pay	...	1,200
House rent	... ..	500
		1,700
Mr. William Hyndman, Assistant		500

per month. There is no fees of any kind allowed.

I am, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 289.

To WILLIAM COWPER, Esq.,

Acting President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue,

FORT WILLIAM.

SYLHET :

April 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

River banks.

I herewith transmit you an account of the expense incurred in renewing the banks of the Surma, Cussearah, and Manoo rivers which exceeds my estimate or somewhat more than 2,000 rupees. These banks have received no repairs for these last 15 years, and were totally swept away in different places for an extent of many miles. I can assure you that the greatest economy has been used in the disbursement, and it is owing to the low price of labour in this district that the works completed have not cost a much larger sum.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 281.

[Received April 26.]

To THE HON'BLE R. LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

14th April 1785.

SIR,

Proposed
three years
settlement.

We have received your letters of the 8th and 13th ultimo, and have directed the Khalsah officers to adjust the accounts of our districts and in future keep them according to the Bengal year.

Paragraph 13th.—We are fully sensible that the settlement for three years is the only mode of uniting the interests of Government with those of the people, and that the certain consequence of a settlement for one year will be a considerable loss in the Revenue, or that the ryotts will be harassed to prevent it, but, as the orders of the Hon'ble the Court of Directors to the contrary are positive, we are sorry it is not in our power to agree to your proposal.

We are, etc.,
WILLIAM COWPER.
THOS. GRAHAM.
J. EVELYN.

No. 282.

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT INDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA :

18th April 1785.

SIR,

Having reconsidered the subject of your letter, accompanyin the plan for a three years settlement of Sylhet, we have thought proper to lay it before the Hon'ble Board for their consideration.

We are, etc.,
WILLIAM COWPER.
THOS. GRAHAM.
C. CROFTES.
J. EVELYN.

No. 282. ,

TO WILLIAM COWPER, Esq., AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF REVENUE,
Fort William.

SYLHET :

1st May 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

Herewith I have the pleasure to transmit you General Treasury Account, Accounts. Charges Collections, Charges Zemindary, Charges General and Jumma Wassil Bankee of the Sylhet district for the year 1191, with duplicates of the whole in the Persian and Bengal languages.

	Cs.	p.
The Jumma of the district for the above year was ...	9,19,407	4
of which I have collected	4,55,700	0
Balance	4,60,707	4

Some small part of which will still be recovered : As you are well acquainted with the immediate cause of this balance, I will not trouble you with any further explanation on the subject, but only beg leave to add that from the general state of the district, in consequence of the inundation, I have realized more than I had any reason to expect the farmers would have paid. I wait your orders respecting the ensuing settlement, and am, etc.

R. LINDSAY.

No. 283.

TO MR. WILLIAM COWPER AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF REVENUE.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT, FORT WILLIAM :

10th May 1788.

GENTLEMEN,

Settlement.

Having resumed the consideration of your address to us, under date the 31st of March last, which we received on the 9th April last, and on the 22nd of that month, on the subject of the settlement of the new year, we empower you to authorize the Collectors who are already established and not recalled by the late resolutions passed by you, to make the settlement of the present year 1194, according to the Hon'ble Company's Orders, under the 39 Article of the Act of the twenty-fourth of His Present Majesty, respecting the rights the zemindars and other landholders.

We are, etc.,
JOHN MCPHERSON.
JOHN STABLES.
CHARLES STUART.

A true copy.

Extracts of letters from the Hon'ble the Court of Directors to the Governor General and Council.

[Vide Circular Volume.]

No. 284.

[Received May 30th.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA :
19th May 1785.

SIR,

River banks.

We have received your letter of the 28th ultimo covering the account of the expence incurred in renewing the banks of the rivers in your district.

Though the amount of this expence exceeds that of your original estimate, yet, for the reasons assigned by you, in your letter we have agreed to admit the charge.

We are, etc.,
W. COWPER.
T. GRAHAM.
C. CROFTES.
J. EVELYN.

No. 285.

[Received 6th June.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY:

REVENUE COMMITTEE,
CALCUTTA :
23rd May 1785.

SIR,

We have received your letter of the 15th instant. All sunnuds being granted by the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council, you will be pleased to inform Goar Hurry Sing thereof, and direct him to apply directly to the Board.

We are, etc.,
W. COWPER.
T. GRAHAM.
C. CROFTES.
J. EVELYN.

No. 286.

[Received 24th.]

TO THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,
Collector of Sylhet.

KHALSA :

1st June 1785.

SIR,

I enclose you a petition from the chowdries of pergunnah Langleh complaining of Gour Hurry (whom they represent now to be and to have then been your paishkar), for having, as they pretend, by artifice effected the sale and thereupon purchased on his own account, a part of their zemindary, by representing that they were in balance, when they assert that they were not. Complaints against Goar Hurry Sing.

To enable me to proceed in the investigation of this complaint, I request you will transmit me on receipt hereof an accurate statement of the amount they were in balance at the time of your making the sale, and inform me also whether it was made under any particular order from the Committee of

Revenue and has obtained their sanction, or in virtue of the general powers vested in you as Collector. Gour Hurry the servant of your's complained against, being now in Calcutta, I sent for him, and he has this day agreed to have a Vakceel at the Khalsha, within one month from this date, to answer the petitioner's complaint as far as regards him.

I am, etc.,

J. DUNCAN,

P. R. R. D.

[The petition in Persian follows.]

No. 267.

To JONATHAN DUNCAN, Esq.,

Preparer of Reports to the Revenue Department,

FORT WILLIAM.

SYLHET:

28th June 1785.

SIR,

Gour
Sing.

Harry

I am favored with your letter of the 1st instant, enclosing a petition from the zemindars of the Lungleh pergunnah representing that Gohrhurry Sing, my Pe hkar, had falsely represented that the said zemindars were in arrears of revenue, and had persuaded me to sell a part of the said zemindary, which was purchased by himself. Gohrhurry, it is true, is my paishkar, but as I hold myself immediately responsible for his conduct, as well as that of every other servant under my immediate authority, the complaint must rest against me, not him.

To enable you to proceed on the investigation of this complaint, you desire me to send you an accurate statement of the amount they were in balance at the time the sale was made. It is not in my power to furnish you with this account. The Jamma of the complainants lands amounted in the year 1190 to 24,000 cawns or about 5,500 sicca rupes, of which, from the commencement to the conclusion of the year, they did not pay one single cowrie. They represent that they had no notice of the sale, and that their lands were disposed of at three days notice. So far from this being the case, four different publications were issued; and, to give them all possible indulgence, the sale was postponed from day to day for six months. Gohrhurry had not the smallest idea of purchasing these lands. The zemindars, from an idea that they were beyond the reach of Government, and that from their remote situation none would dare to purchase any part of their possessions, were refractory to the last. It happened as they expected, although many hundreds attended the sale, not one dared to bid. At my request Gohrhurry became the purchaser, and, at particular desire he continues to insist upon being confirmed the proprietor.

These zemindars are by far the most litigious and turbulent of any under Sylhet, and in no one year did I ever know them to pay above one-half of their established rent to Government without borrowing and ruining the persons who lent. They are besides notorious for oppression, and their lands, which are the highest and best under Sylhet, from this alone a desert and over-run

with wild beasts. The Jumma of the talook sold is small. It does not exceed Rs. 2,500 *per annum*, but, should it be restored to them, my authority in the district, especially with the zamindars at the foot of the hills, must from that moment cease. Gohrhurry has often requested permission to restore the lands, upon being repaid the amount of the purchase, but for the present I have for many reasons objected to it. This talook was included in a list I transmitted to the Committee of Revenue of lands under heavy arrears, and I obtained their sanction to dispose of them by public sale.

I am, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 289.

TO SAMUEL CHARTERS, ESQ.,

President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue,

FORT WILLIAM.

SYLHET :

20th July 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

Under date the 13th March, I took the liberty of transmitting you a Settlement of this district for three years and at the same time gave my opinion that the indulgence proposed was the only means of recovering the Province from the ruinous state it was involved in the inundation and famine which immediately followed it last year. From your answer, dated the 14th April, it pleased to find that you did not disapprove of these proposals, but with pain I observed that they could not be adopted, because a Settlement of this nature was exactly contrary to the Orders of the Court of Directors.

Proposed
three years
Settlement.

As it would be absurd and unreasonable in me, knowing the exact state of the districts, to expect that the proprietors of the lowlands can pay the full amount of the revenue they were cessed with in 1780, I have not insisted upon their renewing engagements, but with their immediate consent and particular request, have sent Sezawuls into their respective districts. It will be my particular study, during the course of the year, to watch over the conduct of these officers, and to take care that they are neither too remiss or severe in their duty; and whatever is collected, you may rest assured shall be punctually brought to account: but at the same time, I think it necessary to acquaint you that the collection this year cannot fail of being 35,000 rupees short of what was collected two years ago. Accompanying I have the pleasure to transmit you an exact copy of the Kistbundee and Settlement of last year, which is the only account of this kind I can furnish with at present.

I am, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 290.

To CHARLES PURLING, Esq.,

and Members of the Committee

elected by the Inhabitants of Calcutta.

SYLHET :

14th August 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

Calcutta
petitions.

I am favoured with your letter of the 1st instant, enclosing resolutions passed by the 15th June last by the inhabitants of Calcutta, all of which I approve of, and be subscribed by the petition now preparing to be presented to His Majesty for the purpose of obtaining redress of the grievances are now labour under.

I have, etc.,

R. LINDSAY.

No. 291.

To THE HON'BLE ROBERT LINDSAY,

Collector of Sylhet.

REVENUE COMMITTEE,

CALCUTTA :

31st October 1785.

SIR,

Accounts.

We have received your towjee account for Bhadoun, but unaccompanied by any explanation of the balance, which we desire you will transmit to us without delay, and in future be careful to send explanations of the balances with your towjee accounts.

We are, etc.,

W. COWPER.

J. EVELYN.

Exd.

C. O.

Assistant.

Dr.

Cd.

ENCLOSURE.

Remittances from Sylhet, year 1784-85.

To balance of the year 1783-84.	...	.....	2,40,263 4 3 3	1784. May. By the amount of a bill drawn by Mr. Lindsay on Mr. William Johnson. 60,000
To remittances of couries to Dacca, viz.				
In July 1784 couries ...	50,000	10,745 7 9 2	.....
August " ...	50,000	10,745 7 9 2	.....	Sep. By ditto 15,000
October " ...	50,000	10,745 7 9 2	.....	75,000
December " ...	60,000	12,894 9 0 0	45,139 15 8 2	Balance 2,19,394 3 12 1
Sicca Rupees ...	...	.....	2,94,334 3 12 1	2,94,394 3 12 1

Dr.

C

Remittances from Sylhet, year 1785-86.

To balance of the year 1784-85 ...	...	2,19,394 3 12 1	By balance 30th Sep. 1785.
To remittance of couries to Dacca, viz.			
In August 1785, couries ...	50,000	10,745 7 9 2	
Sicca Rupees ...	...	2,30,139 11 1 3	Sicca Rs. 2,30,139 11 1 3

RICHARD JOHNSON,

A. G. R. D.

REVENUE COMMITTEE.

A true copy.

J. SPOTISWOOD,

Acting Assistant Secretary.

No. 293.

To SAMUEL CHARTERS, ESQ.,

President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue,

CALCUTTA.

SYLHET:

15th November 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the pleasure to enclose you an account current between the Hon^{ble} Company and me relative to the disposal of the Sylhet cowries at Dacca from the time I was appointed Collector of the district, until the 30th of September of the present year. This account includes all the remittances from Sylhet during the said period, as appears from the monthly Treasury Account. Couries.

My appointment took place in 1782, and the first despatch was made the ensuing March, from which period the account commences.

During the time Sylhet was dependant on Dacca, and I acted as Assistant, the cowries remitted from hence were consigned to the Chief and Council for sale. They, of course, rendered an account of their produce, but I am ignorant in what manner they were disposed of, and can only render you an account from the date I was entrusted with the management.

The price at which the cowries are sold in the enclosed account appears low, but it will be found upon calculation that the loss is not only inevitable but imaginary, and that the Sylhet cowries never did yield so much to Government as at present. At a time when 4 or 5 months intervene between the different despatches of cowries from Sylhet, the nominal price in the bazar of Dacca, when sold in small quantities is 4 cawns and 9 to 10 pun per sicca rupee; but, when two or three 'acks of cawns arrive there are no purchasers to be found upon any terms, the quantity so greatly exceeds the consumption; and when the expence and risk of retransporting the cowries from thence to different markets, with commission to the agents employed in the sale is calculated, it will appear that the gross purchaser derives but little or no advantage.

I flatter myself that the disbursements made at Dacca from the produce of the sales will not meet your disapprobation, having been made under the necessity of paying from that fund the Surgeon, the Brevet Ensign stationed at Sylhet and the officers of the Dewanny and Phogedary courts; for it would be attended with the utmost inconvenience to them were they obliged to receive their allowances in cowries.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

No. 294.

To SAMUEL CHARTERS, Esq.,

President, and Members of the Committee of Revenue,
CALCUTTA.

SYLHET :

8th December 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

Mr. Day, Chief of Dacca, has transmitted me copy of a letter addressed to you by the Accomptant General to the Revenue Department, accompanying an account showing the amount due from the Dacca Chiefship to the end of September 1785 for cowries, which appear to have been remitted from Sylhet unaccounted for. I request you will inform the Accomptant-General that I was appointed Collector of Sylhet in January 1782, and am the only person responsible for the amount of cowries remitted from this place for sale posterior to the said period, while Dacca Chiefship the Council, and after their abolition the Chief, had the management of the sales. In a few days I will furnish you with an account of the disposal of the cowries from the date of my appointment which I hope will prove satisfactory.

I have, etc.,
R. LINDSAY.

